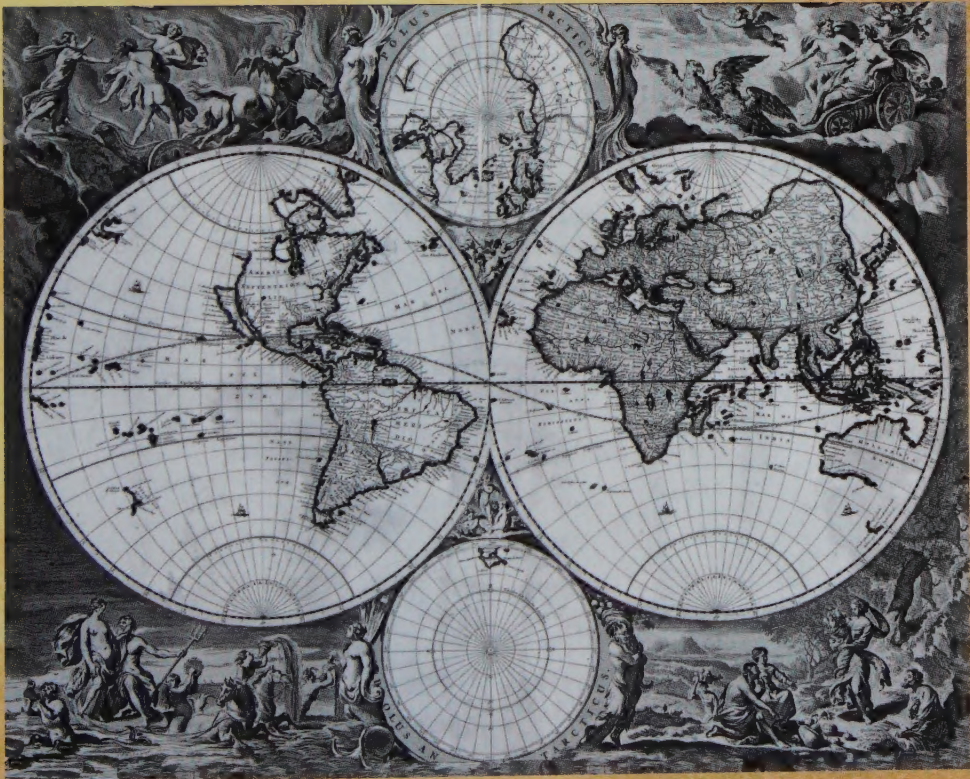


Literature and Language

The private life of the late Benjamin Franklin, LL.D. Originally written by himself, and now translated from the French. To which are added, some account of his public life, a variety of anecdotes

Benjamin Franklin





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Franklin, Benjamin

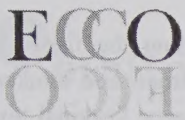
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"Translated from 'Mémoires de la vie privée de Benjamin Franklin écrits par lui même ..' Paris, 1791. The portion written by Franklin extends only to the year 1730, and the continuation is based upon Wilmer's 'Memoirs of .. Franklin'" (NUC). With a half

London : printed for J. Parsons, 1793.

xvi,324p. ; 8°



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The Age of Enlightenment profoundly enriched religious and philosophical understanding and continues to influence present-day thinking. Works collected here include masterpieces by David Hume, Immanuel Kant, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, as well as religious sermons and moral debates on the issues of the day, such as the slave trade. The Age of Reason saw conflict between Protestantism and Catholicism transformed into one between faith and logic -- a debate that continues in the twenty-first century.

Law and Reference

This collection reveals the history of English common law and Empire law in a vastly changing world of British expansion. Dominating the legal field is the *Commentaries of the Law of England* by Sir William Blackstone, which first appeared in 1765. Reference works such as almanacs and catalogues continue to educate us by revealing the day-to-day workings of society.

Fine Arts

The eighteenth-century fascination with Greek and Roman antiquity followed the systematic excavation of the ruins at Pompeii and Herculaneum in southern Italy; and after 1750 a neoclassical style dominated all artistic fields. The titles here trace developments in mostly English-language works on painting, sculpture, architecture, music, theater, and other disciplines. Instructional works on musical instruments, catalogs of art objects, comic operas, and more are also included.

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THE
PRIVATE LIFE
OF THE LATE
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, LL.D.

LATE MINISTER PLINIPOTENTIARY FROM THE UNITED
STATES OF AMERICA TO FRANCE, &c &c &c

Originally written by Himself,
AND NOW TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,
SOME ACCOUNT OF HIS PUBLIC LIFE, A VARIETY OF
ANEC DOTES CONCERNING HIM, BY M. M. BRISSOT,
CONDORCET, ROCHEFOUCAULT, LE ROY, &c. &c.

AND THE EULOGIUM OF M FAUCHET,
CONSTITUTIONAL BISHOP OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CALVADOS,
AND A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL CONVENTION

<i>Eripuit cælo fulmen, mox sceptrâ tyrannis</i>	TURNOT
A Paris, ce grand homme, dans notre ancien régime, seroit resté dans l'ob- scurité, comment employer le fils d'un chandelier ?	LE ROY

L O N D O N
PRINTED FOR J. PEARSON, NO 21, PATTER-NOSTER ROW

P R E F A C E

TO THE

F R E N C H E D I T I O N .

I SHALL not enter into an uninteresting detail relative to the manner in which the original manuscript of these memoirs, which are written in the English language, came into my possession. They appeared to me to be so interesting, that I did not hesitate a single moment to translate them into French.

The name of Franklin will undoubtedly become a passport to a work of this nature; and the character of truth and simplicity, discernible in every page, must guarantee its authenticity; I have no manner of occasion to join other testimonies.

If, however, any critic chooses to disbelieve my assertion, and is desirous to bring the existence of the original manuscript into doubt, I am ready to verify it, by means of an immediate impression*; but, as I

* Those who may be desirous of reading the Memoirs of the Private Life of Franklin, in the original, are requested to leave their names with Buissou, bookseller, Rue Haute-Feuille, N° 20. The work will be sent to the press as soon as there are 400 subscribers. The price is 48 sols.

am not certain of the sale of a work written in a foreign language, I cannot publish it in any other manner than by means of a subscription, large enough to indemnify me for the money advanced

That part of the *Memoirs* of Franklin in my possession, includes no more than the first period of a life, the remainder of which has become illustrious by events of the highest importance, it terminates at the epoch when, after having married, he began to render himself celebrated by plans and establishments of public utility.

It is very possible that he may have written more of his history, for the portion of it which I now present to the Public, concludes, according to his own account, with the year 1771.

If this be the case, the heirs of that great man will not fail some day to publish it, either in England or in Pennsylvania, and we shall doubtless have a French translation, which will be received by the Public with great eagerness; but I am persuaded, that his family will not disclose any other than the most brilliant period of his life; that which is connected with the memorable part he acted in the world, both as a philosopher and a statesman. They will never be prevailed upon to narrate the humble details of his early days, and the simple but interesting anecdotes of his origin, the obscurity of which, although it enhances the talents and the virtues of this great man, may yet wound their own vanity.

If my conjectures prove right; if the memoirs which they are about to publish under the name of Franklin should be mutilated, if the first part, so essential to readers capable of feeling and of judging, should be suppressed, I shall applaud myself for having preserved it, and the world will be obliged to me for having enabled them to follow the early developments of the genius, and the first exertions of the sublime and profound mind of a man, who afterwards penetrated the mystery of electricity, and disconcerted the secret measures of despotism—who preserved the universe from the ravages of thunder, and his native country from the horrors of tyranny !

If I am accidentally mistaken, if the life of Franklin should appear entire, the Public will still have the advantage of anticipating the interesting part of a history which it has long and impatiently expected.

The principal object proposed by the American philosopher, in writing these memoirs, was to instruct posterity, and amuse his own leisure hours. He has permitted his ideas to flow, at the will of his memory and his heart, without ever making any effort to disguise the truth, notwithstanding it is not always very flattering to his self-love—but I here stop, it belongs to Franklin to speak for himself.

It will be easily perceived, that I have preserved as much as possible the ease and simplicity of his style in my translation. I have not even affected to correct the negligence of his language, or to clothe his senti-
ments

ments with a gaudy dress, for which they have no manner of occasion ; I should have been afraid of bereaving the work of one of its principal ornaments

As these memoirs reach no further than his marriage, I have made use of other materials in order to complete so interesting a history, and I have also added a number of anecdotes and remarks relative to this philosophical American.

THE EDITOR.

ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

THE Life of the late Dr. Benjamin Franklin is, perhaps, a *DESIDERATUM* in modern biography; for the manner in which that statesman and philosopher, although destitute of birth, and of fortune, was enabled to struggle into opulence and celebrity, cannot fail to excite the interest, and gratify the curiosity of a liberal and enlightened age.

But this work is estimable in another point of view; for it may be considered as a treatise enforcing the love of virtue and of industry, displaying the advantages arising from study, and exhibiting the most easy mode of acquiring literary and moral excellence.

Youth will be gratified by the early efforts of our Author's rising genius, and old age comforted, at beholding that happy serenity displayed in the latter period of his life.

The Translator would have presented the world with this volume long since, had he not
been

been restrained by a certain degree of delicacy, mingled with veneration, towards the family of this great man; for on being informed by a respectable bookseller in St. Paul's Church-yard, that the works of Franklin were about to be published by his grandson, he with-held the present publication for several months, in expectation of that event.

He begs leave to add, that, throughout the whole work, he has attempted a plain, sober, unadorned, style, as best adapted to convey the Author's sentiments, and that, in the second part, he has supplied some erroneous dates, and cancelled a variety of unjust reflections which were thrown out in England against Dr. Franklin, during the late odious war with America, and but too hastily adopted by the French Editor.

Feb 1, 1793

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T H E

PRIVATE LIFE

O F

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, LL D.

P A R T I.

C H A P I.

The Author's Reasons for undertaking the present Work—A Dissertation upon Vanity—Some Account of his Ancestors—He discovers that he is the youngest Son of the youngest Son for five Generations—Young Franklin is at first destined for the Church—His Father soon after takes him from School and employs him as an Assistant in making Candles, &c — He is desirous of being a Sailor—Some Account of his youthful Frolics—Becomes greatly attached to Books—Is bound Apprentice to a Printer—Begins to study Composition—Adopts a vegetable Regimen—And is extremely fond of Disputation.

MY DEAR SON,

I HAVE lately amused myself with collecting some little anecdotes concerning our family. You must remember the enquiries that I made among such of my relations as remained alive, when you were with me in England, as well as the journey I undertook for that purpose. As I conceive that it must be agreeable to you, to be acquainted with all the circumstances of my life and origin, many particulars of which are at present unknown to you, I

now mean to commit them to paper for your information. It shall be the occupation of a week's uninterrupted leisure, which I promise myself in my present rural retirement. Besides, there are other powerful motives, which impell me to this undertaking. From amidst the poverty and obscurity in which I was born, and in which I passed my early years, I have raised myself to a situation of opulence, and to some share of celebrity in the world. An uninterrupted series of good fortune has accompanied me, even to an advanced period of life; my posterity will therefore perhaps be gratified in learning the means which I have employed, and which, thanks to the assistance of Providence, have so well succeeded with me. They may also derive some useful hints from my experience, should they ever find themselves in similar circumstances.

This good fortune, when I reflect seriously on it, which is frequently the case, has sometimes induced me to say, that if the offer were made to me, I would again engage to travel over the same course, from the beginning to the end. I should only desire the privilege of an author in a second edition, to correct some of the errors of the first. I should likewise wish, were it in my power, to alter some particular incidents and events of my life, for more favorable ones. However, if this condition were refused me, I should nevertheless consent to begin again. But since to repeat life is impossible, that which in my opinion most nearly resembles it, is to recall all its particular circumstances, and to render the remembrance of

of them the more durable, by committing them to writing. In employing myself thus, I shall yield to the inclination so pleasing to old men, to talk of themselves and their own actions, and I shall indulge it without being burdensome to those, who, from respect to my age, might think themselves obliged to listen to me, as it will be always in their option either to read or not, as they please. In truth, I may as well confess (as nobody would believe me if I should deny it,) that perhaps I may in this gratify my self love. I hardly ever heard any person pronounce this preparatory phrase *I may say it without flattering my vanity, &c* without its being immediately followed by some strongly marked stroke, characteristic of that very vanity which they seemed desirous to deprecate.

The generality of men detest this foible in others, however large a portion of it they themselves may possess. For my own part, I pardon it wherever I find it, persuaded that it is advantageous to the individual whom it influences, as well as to all those who come within its sphere of action. Consequently it would, in many cases, be by no means absurd, that a man should consider his vanity among the comforts of his life, and give thanks to Providence that he is endowed with it.

And in this place let me acknowledge in all humility, that to Divine Providence I attribute the happiness I have hitherto enjoyed. It alone has presented to my mind all the means that I have made use of, and has influenced their success. My belief

in this respect induces me to hope, although I ought by no means to depend upon it, that the divine goodness will be continued towards me, either in prolonging my good fortune to the termination of my life, or in granting me strength to support any unfortunate reverse which may happen to me, as it has to so many others. My future fate is known to Him alone, who holds our destiny in his hands, and who can convert our very afflictions into the sources of our greatest happiness.

One of my uncles, desirous like myself of collecting anecdotes relative to our family, gave me some notes, from which I have extracted several circumstances concerning our ancestors. From these I learn that they lived in the village of Eaton, in Northamptonshire, on a freehold of about thirty acres, during at least three hundred years. My uncle could not discover how long they had resided there prior to that period. It is probable they had continued ever since the time when, in imitation of their fellow citizens all over the kingdom, who then began to assume particular names, they took that of Franklin, which previously denominated a peculiar class of people.

This inconsiderable property would not have sufficed for their subsistence, had it not been for the occupation of a blacksmith, which continued in the family down to my time, the eldest son being always brought up to that trade, a custom which both my uncle and my father followed, with respect to their eldest sons.

Among

Among the enquiries I made at Eaton, I found no account of their births, marriages, or deaths, prior to the year 1555, as the parish-register extends no farther back than that period. I learned from it however, that I was the youngest son of the youngest son for five generations. My grandfather, Thomas, who was born in the year 1598, lived at Eaton till he was too old to continue his business, and then retired to Banbury in Oxfordshire, to the house of his son John, a dyer, to whom my father was apprentice. There my grandfather died and was buried, we saw his tomb-stone in 1758. His eldest son Thomas lived in the family house at Eaton, and left it, together with the landed property, to his only daughter, who agreed with her husband, Mr. Fisher of Wellingborough, to sell the whole to Mr. Ested, the present proprietor.

My grandfather had four sons who lived to be men, namely, Thomas, John, Benjamin, and Josias. I shall mention to you such circumstances relative to them, as my memory furnishes me with, not having my papers at hand, in which you will find more particulars, provided they have not been lost during my absence.

Thomas had learned the business of a blacksmith, with my father, but having some natural genius, he improved himself by study, in consequence of the advice of ——— Palmer, Esq. who was at that time the principal man in the parish, and who encouraged all my uncles in the acquisition of knowledge. Thomas thus enabled himself to transact the business of
B 3 a steward.

a steward. He soon became a man of some little consequence, and was one of the principal projectors of all the public enterprises, for the benefit of the county and town of Northampton, as well as for the good of his own village. After having been a good deal noticed and protected by Lord Halifax, he died on the 6th day of January, 1692, exactly four years before I was born. Could I remember the particulars of his life and character, as related to me by some old people in the village, you would be surprised at the analogy of many parts of them with mine. "Had he died," you would say, "four years later, one would have supposed that a transmigration had actually taken place."

John I believe was brought up a dyer of woollens.

Benjamin served an apprenticeship in London, to a silk dyer, he was an industrious man. I remember him well, for while I was yet a child he came to join my father in Boston, and lived some time in our house. A particular friendship subsisted between them, and I was his namesake; he lived to a very advanced age. He left two manuscript volumes in quarto, of poetry, of his own composition, consisting of little fugitive pieces addressed to his friends; he had formed to himself a system of short hand, which he taught me, but having never practised it, it has long since slipped from my memory. He was a pious man, and attended the sermons of our best preachers, which he delighted in taking down in the expeditious mode adopted, if not invented by him, and of these he had collected several volumes. He

was

was also fond of politics, too much so perhaps for his situation. I lately met in London, with a collection he had made of all the principal political pamphlets, from the year 1641 to 1717. Some part of the series is manifestly wanting, but there still remained eight volumes in folio, and twenty-four in quarto and octavo. This collection had fallen into the hands of a dealer in old books, who knew me, by having been a customer, and brought it to me. My uncle apparently had left it with him, when he went to America, fifty years ago. I found many notes written on the margin with his own hand. His grandson Samuel Franklin still lives at Boston.

Our humble family at an early period embraced the principles of the reformed religion. Our forefathers remained faithfully attached to it during the reign of Mary, and were in danger of being harrassed on account of their zeal against Popery. They were in possession of an English version of the Bible: In order to conceal and preserve it in safety, they bethought themselves of fastening it with strings, in an open position, to the inside of the cover of a night-stool. When my great grandfather was desirous of reading it to the family, he reversed the cover upon his knees, and turned over the leaves, without unloosing the cords which fastened it. One of the children always remained at the door to give notice if he saw the apparitor approaching, this was an officer of the spiritual-court. On the least alarm, the cover of the night-stool was instantly restored to its proper place, and the bible remained concealed underneath

it as usual. This anecdote I had from my uncle Benjamin.

The whole family continued attached to the church of England, till towards the conclusion of the reign of Charles the Second; an æra when some of the ministers who had been displaced as non-conformists, having established conventicles in Northamptonshire, Benjamin and Josias joined them, never again to separate. The rest of the family continued in the Episcopal church.

Josias, my father, married early. He carried his wife and three children to New-England, about the year 1682. The conventicles being at that time under the proscription of the law, and their meetings frequently disturbed, some considerable people of his acquaintance resolved to go to America, in hopes of enjoying the quiet exercise of their religion; and he determined to accompany them.

My father had four more children by the same wife in America, and ten by a second marriage; in all seventeen. I remember to have seen thirteen of them at table together, all of whom grew up and married. I was the youngest son, and the youngest of all the children, excepting two daughters.

I was born at Boston in New-England. My mother, my father's second wife, was Abias Folger, the daughter of Peter Folger, one of the first settlers in New-England, whom Cotton Mather mentions in his ecclesiastical history of that province, as a *pious and learned Englishman*, if I remember his expression properly. I have heard that he composed several little pieces,

pieces, though one only was printed. I saw it many years ago ; it was written in 1675, in familiar verse, according to the taste of the times and the country. It is addressed to the then governors, and requests liberty of conscience for the Anabaptists, the Quakers, and other sectaries, who had recently been persecuted. He attributes the war with the natives, and other calamities which at that time afflicted the country, to this persecution, considering them as so many judgments of God, for the punishment of this odious crime. He also exhorts the government to abrogate laws so inimical to charity. This piece appeared to me to be written with a certain degree of masculine liberty, and agreeable simplicity.

My brothers were all bound apprentices to various trades. With respect to myself, I was put to a grammar-school, in the eighth year of my age. My father destined me for the church, and already considered me as the chaplain of the family. The facility with which I learned to read in my infancy, (for I do not recollect the time when I could not read,) and the opinion of all his friends, who assured him that I would certainly become a man of letters, confirmed him in this design. My uncle Benjamin likewise approved of it, and promised to give me all his volumes of sermons, written in his own short-hand, as I have already mentioned, provided I would be at the trouble to learn it. I remained, however hardly a twelvemonth at school, although during that short period I had risen successively to the middle of that year's class, then to the top of the same class, thence to the class immediately

immediately above, and I should have gone into the next, at the beginning of the ensuing year ; but my father, burdened with a numerous family, found himself unable, without much inconvenience, to support the expences of my education, besides, considering, as I heard him say in my presence, the small encouragement that such a line of life affords to those educated purposely for it, he renounced his original idea, withdrew me from my studies, and sent me to the school of a Mr. George Brownwell, to learn writing and arithmetic, he was a skilful master, who commonly succeeded very well in his profession, by employing only the gentlest methods towards his pupils. I soon learned under his tuition to write a good hand, but in arithmetic I made not the smallest progress.

At ten years of age I was brought home to assist my father in his business, which was that of a candle and soap-maker, trades, to which he had not indeed served an apprenticeship, but which he had embraced on his arrival in New-England, finding that there was not sufficient employment for a dyer, to enable him to support his family. My employments consequently were to attend the shop, cut the wicks for the candles, run errands, &c.

I disliked this trade much, and had a great inclination for that of a sailor, but my father positively declared against this idea. However, the neighbourhood of the water afforded me frequent occasions of exercising myself both on it and in it. I learned early to swim and to steer a boat, and when I was embarked

barked with other children of my own age, they always gave up to me the management of the helm, especially on dangerous occasions. Indeed, I was almost always the leader of the party, and frequently brought them into mischief. I shall mention to you one example, which evinces an early spirit of public enterprise, although not indeed in this case consistent with justice.

The reservoir of a neighbouring mill was terminated on one side by a salt pit, on the bank of which we used to place ourselves at full tide, in order to catch small fish. As by frequently treading on it, we had rendered it a perfect mire, I proposed to construct a causeway on which we might stand dry and firm. I pointed out to my comrades a large quantity of stones, collected indeed for the purpose of building a new house near the salt-pit, but admirably calculated for completing our project: On the evening, after the workmen were gone home, I got together a number of my play-fellows, and by labouring diligently like so many ants, two or three sometimes assisting to remove a single stone, we carried the whole off, and constructed our little key. In the morning, the workmen were astonished at not finding their stones, which had all travelled to our causeway. The authors of this transfer being found out and detected, most of us received a correction from our parents; and although I demonstrated the utility of our labours, my father convinced me that nothing could be truly useful which was not strictly honest.

Perhaps

Perhaps you may be desirous to know what sort of a man my father was? He had an excellent constitution, was of a middling size, but well made, very strong, and dexterous in performing whatever he attempted. He drew pretty well, and he knew something of music; his voice also was sonorous and agreeable, so that when he sung a psalm-tune, accompanied with his violin, which he sometimes did in the evening, it was truly pleasing to hear him, he likewise knew something of mechanics, and could occasionally use the tools of several trades. But his most excellent quality was a sound understanding and solid judgment, of such matters as came within the jurisdiction of prudence, whether appertaining to public or private life. He was never indeed employed in the former, because the numerous family he had to educate, and the moderateness of his fortune, kept him incessantly employed in his profession; but I well remember that he was frequently consulted by our principal men, who came to ask his opinion relative to the affairs of the town, or of the particular sect to which he belonged, and they paid great deference to his judgment, individuals also often applied to him on their private affairs when involved in difficulties, and he was frequently chosen arbitrator between contending parties.

He was fond to see at his table, as often as it was convenient, some friends or neighbours of superior understanding, whose conversation was agreeable; and

and he always took care to introduce subjects either useful or amusing, which might tend to instruct his children. By these means he early formed our minds to what was good, just, prudent, and useful, in the conduct of life. Never was there any enquiry concerning the dishes that appeared on the table, nor any discussion whether they were well or ill cooked, in or out of season, tasted agreeably or the contrary, or were preferable or inferior to such and such others of the same kind. Thus accustomed from my infancy to the utmost inattention to these matters, I have been all my life wholly indifferent as to what kind of food was set before me, and even now I pay so little attention to it, that a few hours after my dinner, I should be unable to say of what it had consisted. In travelling I have more especially found the advantage of this habit, for I have often met with people who, possessing a nicer taste than myself, because they cultivated it more, suffered much on occasions where for my own part I could perceive nothing wanting.

My mother also had a most excellent constitution. She had suckled all her ten children herself, and I never remember to have seen either her or my father afflicted with any complaint, except that of which they died; my father, at the age of eighty-seven, and my mother of eighty-five. They were buried together at Boston, where, a few years ago, I placed a marble tablet over their grave, with the following inscription.

“ Here

“ Here Lie

“ JOSIAS FRANKLIN and ABIAS his Wife,

“ They lived together with reciprocal affection during fifty-
“ nine years, and without any settled revenue or lucrative
“ employment, by means of assiduous labour, and honest industry,
“ maintained a numerous family with decency, and brought up
“ thirteen children, and seven grand-children

“ Reader, let their example encourage you to fulfil with dili-
“ gence the duties of your vocation, and to rely on the assistance
“ of Divine Providence !

“ He, was pious, and prudent,

“ She, discreet, and virtuous.

“ Their youngest Son fulfils his duty,

“ In consecrating this stone to their memory ”

I perceive by my rambling digressions that I am old. I formerly wrote with more method, but one does not dress for private company, as if they were going to a ball. This is perhaps merely negligence.

To return, I continued to follow the profession of my father, during two years, that is to say, till I was twelve years of age ; at that time, my brother John, who had served an apprenticeship to the same trade, having left my father, married, and set up for himself, in Rhode Island, I was destined, according to all appearances, to supply his place, and continue all my life a maker of candles. But my aversion to this business continued, and made my father afraid, that if he did not offer me some more agreeable occupation, I would leave him and go to sea, as my brother Josias had done, very much to his dissatisfaction. For that reason he carried me to see masons, joiners, coopers,

coopers, braziers, &c. at work, in order to try if he could fix my inclination on some profession that would keep me at home. Ever since that time it has afforded me pleasure to see good workmen handle their tools, and I have often experienced the utility of what I had picked up in this manner, by its enabling me to do little jobs for myself when there were no workmen at hand, and to construct small machines for my experiments at the moment when the ideas I wished to realize were fresh and strongly imprinted on my mind.

My father at last resolved to make me a cutler ; he sent me a few days on trial, to Samuel, son of my uncle Benjamin, who, after learning this trade in London, had lately settled in Boston ; but the sum he exacted as my apprentice fee, not being agreeable to my father, I was again taken home.

From my infancy I was fond of reading, and I laid out in books all the little money I could procure. I was particularly delighted with relations contained in voyages, my first acquisition was Bunyan's Works in small separate volumes. I afterwards sold this, in order to enable me to purchase the Historical Collection, by R. Button, which consisted of about forty or fifty little cheap volumes.

The small library belonging to my father, consisted principally of books of practical and polemical divinity ; I read the greatest part of them. I have often regretted, that, at a time, when I had so great a thirst for knowledge, some better books did not fall into my hands, as it was decided that I was not to belong

belong to the church. He had also the lives of Plutarch, in which I read much, and I still consider the time spent in perusing them, as well employed. I likewise found a work of Daniel de Foe, entitled *an essay on projects*, from which I received impressions that may perhaps have influenced some of the principal events of my life.

My inclination for books at length determined my father to make a printer of me, although one of his sons was already in that profession. My brother James had returned from England in 1717, with a press and types, in order to establish a printing-house at Boston. This business was much more agreeable to me than that of my father, although I had still a predilection for the sea. To prevent the effects that might result from this inclination, my father was impatient to see me bound apprentice to my brother. I refused a long while; at length I allowed myself to be persuaded, and signed my indentures at twelve years of age. It was agreed that I should serve as an apprentice till I was one and twenty, and should only receive wages as a workman during the last year.

In a short time I made great progress in this business, and became an useful assistant to my brother. I had now an opportunity of procuring better books; the connections that I necessarily had with the apprentices of booksellers, enabled me now and then to borrow some volumes from them, which I always returned very punctually and uninjured. How often have I passed the greater part of the night reading in

my chamber, when a book had been lent me in the evening, which it was necessary to return in the morning, lest it should be perceived to be missing, or should be enquired after !

At length, a merchant of the name of Matthew Adams, a man of some abilities, and possessed of a good collection of books, who used to come frequently to our printing-house, paid some attention to me , he invited me to see his library, and had the goodness to lend me such books as I wished to read . I was at this time seized with a strong inclination for poetry, and composed several trifles in verse . My brother imagining that he might find his account in it, encouraged me, and engaged me to compose two ballads, the one called the *Tragedy of Pharaoh*, contained an account of the shipwreck of Captain Worthulake and his two daughters, the other was a sailor's song, on the capture of a famous pirate, named Teach, or Black-Beard, they were wretched in point of style, mere blind-men's ditties. After they were printed, my brother sent me to hawk them about the town, the first had a prodigious run, because it related a recent and much-talked-of event

Success flattered my vanity, but my father depressed my courage, by ridiculing my performances, and telling me, that verse makers were always poor. Thus I escaped the misfortune of being a poet, probably a very bad one , but as the talent of writing in prose has been of great utility to me in the course of my life, and has principally contributed to my advancement, I shall now recount to you, by what means,

in the situation I then was, I acquired what small degree of ability I may possess in that line.

There was no other young man in the town, a great lover of books also, called John Collins, with whom I was intimately acquainted. We had frequent disputes with each other, we loved argument, and liked nothing better than to be by the cars together. It is astonishing to me of mind, by the bye, is apt to become a very bad habit, which often renders a person quite portable in company, because it can only be satisfied through the medium of conversation, and, besides the animosity and trouble which it occasions in domestic families, it frequently produces dislike, and even enmities, between those who have the greatest occasion to cultivate each others' friendship. I acquired this at first, by reading books composed by children, when I lived with my father. I have since observed, that sensible people rarely fall into his error, except those who belong to the law, the students of the university, and men of professions who have received their education at the bench.

One day, one day, I have not lost, a dispute between Collins and me, relative to the education of young gentlemen, whether it was proper that they should be instructed in the sciences, and if they had to read books, study. He supported the negative, and asserted that that line was above their powers. He was naturally more eloquent than me, and flowed in abundance from his mouth, and, as I was in no opinion, I was vanquished more

more by his volubility, than by his powers of argument. We parted without having agreed on the point in question, and as we were not to meet again for some time, I put my reasons upon paper, made a clean copy, and sent it to him. He answered, and I replied. Three or four letters written by each party had thus passed between us, when my father accidentally found my papers and read them. Without entering into any discussion of the point in dispute, he took occasion to speak of my manner of writing. He observed, that although I had the advantage of my antagonist in orthography, and punctuation, which I derived from the printing-house, I was much his inferior in elegance of expression, in method, and in clearness. Of this he convinced me by a variety of examples. I felt the justice of his remarks; I became more attentive to language, and resolved to endeavour to improve my style.

About this time there fell into my hands an odd volume of the Spectator; it was the third; I had never seen any of them before, I bought it, I read and re-read it, and was delighted with my purchase, I found the style excellent, and was desirous if possible to imitate it. In order to succeed, I selected some of the papers, made short summaries of the sense of each period, and laid them aside for some days, after which I endeavoured, without looking at the original, to recompose the essay, and to express at length each thought as it was in the book, employing such phrases as occurred to my mind. I next compared my Spectator with the

C 2

original,

original; I recognized some of my faults and corrected them, but I found I was in want of a provision of words, in order to express myself properly, as well as of a faculty of recollecting and using them, all of which it appeared to me that I might have acquired before this time, had I continued my practice of making verses. The perpetual want of words of similar signification, but of various lengths suited to the measure, as well as of different sounds for the rhyme, would have necessitated me to have searched for synonyma, would have fixed them in my head, and made me master of them. In consequence of this idea I took several of the stories of the Spectator, and turned them into verse. After some time, when I had completely forgotten the original, I wrote them anew in prose.

Sometimes I mingled all my summaries together, and after an interval of a few weeks, I endeavoured to arrange them in the best order, before I began to form the entire periods or complete the discourse. This was with a view to attain a method in the arrangement of my thoughts. Afterwards, on comparing my work with the original, I discovered many faults and corrected them. But I had sometimes the pleasure of imagining that in a few particulars of little importance, I had been fortunate enough to correct the method or the language, and this encouraged me to hope, that perhaps I might with much pains attain to write decent English, which was one of the principal objects of my ambition.

The

The time which I employed in these exercises, and in reading, was the evening after the labour of the day was over, the morning before it began, or on Sundays when I found means of remaining alone at the printing-house, by absenting myself from assisting at divine service. My father insisted on my attending regularly at church while I lived in his house, in truth I still considered it as my duty, although it appeared to me that I had not time to practise it.

At the age of sixteen I read a work by Tryon, in which he recommends a vegetable diet, I resolved to observe it. My brother being a bachelor, did not keep house, but boarded himself and his apprentices with a neighbour. My refusal to eat animal food was productive of inconvenience, and I was frequently scolded for my singularity. I made myself master of the mode in which Tryon prepared several of his dishes, such as simply boiling potatoes, or rice, making hasty-pudding, and the like. I then told my brother, that if he would allow me weekly the one half of what he paid for my board, I would maintain myself. He consented immediately, and I soon found that even of this half, I could save a part. This was a new fund for the purchase of books, and was also productive of other advantages. When my brother, and the workmen, left the printing-house to go to dinner, I remained, and quickly dispatching my slight repast, which was often no more than a biscuit or a slice of bread, with a handful of dried raisins, or a cake from the pastry-cooks with a glass of water, I had the remainder of the time till their

return for study, and my progress was in proportion to that clearness of ideas and promptitude of conception, which are the concomitants of temperance, in eating and drinking.

It was about this time, that being put to the blush for my ignorance in arithmetic, which I had twice failed to learn at school, I took up Cocker, and went through the whole of it by myself, with the greatest facility.

I read also the navigation of Seller, and Sturmy, and made myself master of what little geometry they contained, but I never made any great progress in that science. I read nearly about the same time, Lee's *Essay on the Human Understanding*, and the *Art of Thinking* of M. M. de Port Royal.

While I was labouring to form and improve my style, I met with an English grammar, I think it was Green's, at the end of which, there are two little essays on rhetoric and logic, in the last I found an example of a Socratic disputation. Soon afterwards I procured Xenophon's *Memorabilia* of Socrates, in which several other examples of this method are given. I embraced it with enthusiasm, and instantly renounced blunt contradiction, as well as direct and positive argument, and confined myself to an simple mode of asking questions. The reading of Shaftesbury, and Collins made me a Pyrrhonist, and as I was so previously, with respect to several religious doctrines, I found that the Socratic mode of reasoning was more advantageous for myself, as well as

more embarrassing to those against whom I employed it

I soon took much delight in it, and practised it on all occasions, and I became dextrous in obtaining, even from those who were much my superiors in point of knowledge, concessions of whose consequences they themselves were not aware. I thus embarrassed them in difficulties, from which they could not extricate themselves, and often obtained victories neither due to my cause, nor to my arguments.

I continued to use this mode of disputation during several years, however, I gave it up by degrees, only preserving the habit of expressing myself in terms of diffidence and modesty, and when I advanced any doubtful position, I was careful never to use the words *certainly*, *undoubtedly*, or any other that might convey the idea of obstinate attachment to my own opinion. I would rather say, *I conceive*, or *I suppose such a thing may be so*, *it appears to me that I should think so* or *so, so, such or such reasons*, or, *I imagine it may be thus or thus, if I am not deceived*. This habit I think has been very useful to me, when I have been desirous of impressing my opinions on the minds of other men, or of persuading them to adopt measures, which I have from time to time proposed to them, and since the chief ends of conversation are to *inform*, or *to be informed*, *to please*, or *to persuade*, I earnestly desire, that enlightened and well-meaning men, may not voluntarily diminish the power which they possess of doing good,

By a positive and presumptuous manner of expressing themselves, which never fails to disgust their hearers, to excite opposition, and to destroy all the purposes, for which speech has been bestowed on man.

In a word, if you are desirous of instructing others, a positive and dogmatical manner of advancing your opinion, serves only to provoke contradiction, and to prevent you from being listened to with attention. If with a wish to learn, and to profit from the knowledge of others, you express yourself as one strongly attached to your own opinions, modest and sensible men, who are averse to contest, will probably allow you to remain in peace in possession of your errors. In following such a method, you can rarely hope to please your auditors, so as to conciliate their good will, or to persuade such as you are desirous of inducing to concur with you, in your intentions. Pope judiciously observes, that

“ Mean to be taught as if not taught them not,
And things you never propos’d as things forgot ”

He also advises

“ To speak, tho’ sure, with seeming diffidence,”

He might here have added a line, which he has inserted in another place, in my opinion, with less propriety

“ For want of modesty is want of sense ”

If you ask, why I say with less propriety ? I will mention the two lines together :

“ Immodest words admit of no defence,

“ For want of modesty is want of sense ”

But

But is not the want of sense, when a man has the misfortune to be in that predicament, a sort of apology for the want of modesty? And would not these lines be more consonant to truth were they written thus,

Immodest words, admit *but this defence*

That want of modesty is want of sense

This, however, I refer to those who are better judges of these matters than I can pretend to be.

C H A P T E R II

Young Franklin is eager to acquire Literary Reputation—He sends some anonymous Essays to his Brother's News-paper—The Origin of his Devotion to Arithmetic, Poetry—He becomes discontented with his Situation—Learns Boston—Embarks for New York at the age of Seventeen—Lives there, and sets out soon after for Philadelphia—Saves the life of a Dutchman—A Dissertation concerning the Plague's Progress, written by the celebrated John Bartram—Our Author cures himself of a Fever by drinking cold Water—Some Account of Dr. Brown—Arrival in PHILADELPHIA

MY brother resolved in 1720 or 1721, to set up a news-paper, it was the second that had been printed in America, and was entitled, "The New England Courant," the only one that ever appeared before, was the "Boston News Letters." I recollect very well, that some of his friends wished to dissuade him from this enterprize, representing it as a scheme that in all human probability would prove unsuccessful, because, according to them, a single news paper was sufficient for all America. Notwithstanding this, there are now (in 1771) no less than twenty-five

He however carried his project into execution, and I was employed in distributing the papers among his customers, after having assisted in printing and working them off

There were a few ingenious men of my brother's acquaintance, who amused themselves by writing little essays

essays for his paper, and this circumstance not only added to the credit, but augmented the sale of it. These gentlemen often called upon us, I listened to their conversation with great eagerness, and heard them exult at the good reception which their writings received from the public. I was tempted to aspire to the same kind of reputation, but as I was still a boy, I naturally enough concluded that my brother would not insert any thing of which he knew me to be the author. I resolved therefore to disguise my handwriting, and having drawn up an anonymous speculation, I put it that very night under the printing-house door. It was found next morning, and immediately communicated to the little literary club; they read it in my own hearing, and I enjoyed the exquisite satisfaction of knowing that it had obtained their approbation, and, that among their various conjectures concerning the author, they did not indicate a single person who did not enjoy a great reputation for genius and abilities in the province. At present I am inclined to suppose that I was extremely lucky in my judges, and that they were not so excellent as I believed them to be. Encouraged, however, by their applause, I wrote and sent to the press in the same manner, several other papers of my composition, all of which were also approved of, and I preserved my secret until my little stock of ideas was completely exhausted.

My brother from that moment began to have a little more respect for me, but he still looked upon himself as my master, continued to treat me as an apprentice,

prentice, and insisted on receiving the same services from me as if I had been an utter stranger. I, on the other hand, imagined that he required too much from me in many cases, and thought myself intitled to more indulgence on the part of a brother. Our disputes were often referred to my father, and I am inclined to think that the other was either for the most part in the wrong, or that I was the better advocate of the two; for judgment was commonly declared in my favour: But my brother, who was choleric, still continued to strike me, a circumstance which I took in great dudgeon.

I have been often since induced to think, that this harsh and tyrannical treatment, contributed not a little to imprint in my mind, that aversion for arbitrary power which I have retained during the remainder of my life.

In a short time my apprenticeship became so insupportable, that I sighed after an opportunity to shorten it, at last one presented itself in a very unexpected manner. A paragraph inserted in our paper, concerning some political subject which I do not at present recollect, happened to give great offence to the assembly. My brother was arrested, reprimanded, and imprisoned, by the speaker, because, as I imagine, he would not give up the author. I myself was also taken into custody, and examined before the council; but although I did not give any satisfaction to its members, on the subject concerning which I was questioned, they contented themselves with admonishing me,

me, considering me perhaps as obliged, in quality of an apprentice, to preserve my master's secrets inviolable.

Notwithstanding our private quarrels, my brother's imprisonment inspired me with much resentment. While it continued I was intrusted with the direction of the paper, and I had the courage to insert some bold observations upon the conduct of his prosecutors. This circumstance gave great satisfaction to him, but his adversaries began to look upon me in an unfavourable point of view, and to consider me as a dangerous young man, much given to libels.

The enlargement of my brother was accompanied by a very strange order from the assembly, directing, that "James Franklin should no longer print the news-paper, entitled, *The New England Courant*."

On this he assembled all his friends in our printing-house, in order to consult what was proper to be done in this conjuncture. Some proposed to elude the sentence by altering the title of the news paper, but my brother perceiving great inconvenience in this scheme, it was at length agreed, that it would be infinitely better to print it henceforth under the name of Benjamin Franklin, and in order to evade the vengeance of the assembly, which might overwhelm him, under pretence of still printing this news-paper, through the intervention of his apprentice, it was decided that my indentures should be given up, with a complete and final discharge at the back of it, so that it might be produced by me in case of necessity, but, that in order to insure to my brother the benefit arising from my services I should sign a new contract for the unexpired part of

the term, which should be kept secret. This was a very foolish arrangement. It was, however, instantly put in execution, and the paper, in consequence of it, was printed for several months under my name.

At length, another quarrel having taken place between my brother and me, I was determined to make use of my newly-acquired liberty, pretending that he would not dare to produce the engagement into which I had recently entered. It was not indeed, however, on my part, to make use of any such pretence, and I, in consequence, look upon this as one of the first errors that I committed, but the singularity of it made but little impression on my mind, embittered as it was by resentment, on account of the blows which my brother's anger had often placed him to make me experience, and though in other respects his disposition was not naturally bad, perhaps my answers were such as to give him further provocation.

When he perceived that I was resolved to leave him, he endeavoured to prevent me from working any where else; he accordingly went to all the printing-houses in the town, and procured the master-pressmen against me, who consequently refused to give me any employment.

I then determined to repair to New-York, which was the nearest town where there was a press. After long consideration, I was confirmed in my design of leaving Boston, where I had already rendered myself odious to government. It appeared to me to be very likely, after the arbitrary proceedings of the assembly against my brother, that any longer stay there might

expose

expose me to embarrassments, and I had still greater reason to fear this, as my indiscreet disputes concerning religion, made me begin already to be looked upon with horror by the *faithful*, who considered me as an Apostate, or an Atheist.

I accordingly came to a determination ; but my father being for this once on my brother's side, I presumed that if I departed openly, they would take the proper means to prevent me.

My friend Collins undertook to assist me in my flight. He made a bargain for my passage with the captain of a sloop, belonging to New-York, to whom he told that I was a young man of his acquaintance who had an intrigue with a woman of bad character, whose relations wished to force him to marry her, and that in consequence, I neither dared to appeal, nor to depart publicly.

I sold part of my books in order to procure a small sum of money, and I then repaired secretly on board the sloop. By means of a good wind I found myself in three days at New-York, 300 miles distant from the place of my nativity, at the age of seventeen, without the least recommendation, without even knowing a single person in that town, and with a very scanty supply of money in my pocket.

The attachment I had once formed to the life of a sailor was entirely evaporated, else I might now have satisfied my propensity in favour of that occupation ; but having another trade, and thinking myself a good workman, I did not hesitate to offer my services to the only printer in this town, old Mr. William Bradford,

ford, who had been settled in Pennsylvan'a, but had quitted that province, on account of a quarrel with Governor Keith. He could not give me any employment, having but little to do, and being already provided with a sufficient number of men, but he told me that his son, who was a printer in Philadelphia, had some time since lost his principal workman, Aquila Rose, and that if I went there, he believe I might be employed by him.

Philadelphia is one hundred miles from New-York, but I did not hesitate to embark on board a small vessel, in order to repair by the shortest cut to Amboy, leaving my trunk and effects behind, which were to come to me by a circuitous voyage. In crossing the Bay we experienced a gale of wind that tore all our sails, which, by the bye, were very rotten, prevented us from entering the Schuylkill, and obliged us to bear away for Long-Island.

During the storm, a drunken Dutchman, who was a passenger as well as myself, fell over-board. At the moment he plunged into the sea, I seized hold of him by the hair of his head, and drew him towards the vessel, so that with a little help I contrived to get him once more on board. This immersion seemed to make him a little more sober, and he soon after fell asleep, having first pulled a book out of his pocket, which he begged me to dry for him; this happened to be a translation of my old favourite Bunyan into low Dutch, it was an excellent impression, on superfine paper, with copper-plate prints, a more favourable appearance than I had ever seen it assume in the original.

original. I have since learned, that it has been translated into most of the European languages, and I am persuaded, that, after the Bible, it is one of the books which has been most in circulation.

Honest John is the first I know of, who has mingled narrative and dialogue together; a mode of writing very engaging to the reader, who in the most interesting passages, finds himself admitted, as it were, into the company, and present at the conversation. Defoe has imitated him with success in his Robinson Crusoe, his Moll Flanders, and several other works, and Richardson has done the same in his Pamela, &c.

On approaching Long-Island we found ourselves unable to land, on account of the surf on that part of the coast, which proved to be very rocky. We therefore cast anchor and veered out our cable, so as to bring us as near as possible to the shore, some of the inhabitants came down towards the sea-side, and hailed us, as we did them, but the wind was so strong and the waves so boisterous, that we could not understand one another. We perceived several small boats, and we made signs, and desired them to come with one of these and take us from on board, but they either did not comprehend us, or our request appeared impracticable to them, for they soon after retired.

Night now approached, and nothing else was left for us but to have patience until the wind abated, in expectation of this event, the pilot and I determined, if possible, to get a little sleep. In order to accomplish this, we retired between the hatches, and rejoined the

Dutchman, who was still wet. The waves, however, were so low and then broke over the vessel, ran through the planks of the lower quarter-deck in such a manner, that we were soon nearly as much drenched as himself.

We had but little repose during the night, but the wind having become a little less violent next morning, we succeeded in reaching Amboy before the evening, after having been thirty hours destitute of provisions and deprived of any other nourishment than a bottle of bad rum, the water on which we sailed being salt.

I retired to bed early, with a very violent fever. I had somewhere read, that cold water drunk in abundance, was an excellent remedy on this occasion: I accordingly followed the prescription, and having sweated copiously during the greatest part of the night, the fever left me.

Next morning I passed the ferry, and continued my journey on foot. I had fifty miles to travel before I reached Burlington, where I had been told I should find a boat that would carry me to Philadelphia. It rained hard during the whole day, and I was wet to the skin. Finding myself extremely fatigued about noon, I stopped at a miserable public-house, where I passed the rest of the day, and the ensuing night. I now almost began to regret that I had ever left home, for my appearance was such, that I was suspected of being a runaway servant, this I perceived by the questions put to me, and I began to think that I ran some risk of being arrested as such. I however continued my journey next morning, without interrup-
tion;

tion, arrived on the same evening within eight or ten miles of Burlington, and took up my quarters at an inn kept by a person who passed by the name of Dr. Brown.

This man entered into conversation with me, during supper, and finding that I had read a little, he testified the liveliest friendship for, and interest in my behalf. Our acquaintance continued during the remainder of his life. I imagine that he had been what is commonly termed a Quack Doctor, for there was not a single city in England, or indeed in any country in Europe, of which he could not give some description. He possessed a certain degree of learning and genius, but he was an Infidel; and a few years after, he wickedly attempted to turn the Bible into burlesque metre, as Cotton had formerly *travestied* Virgil. By these means he represented a number of facts under a ridiculous point of view; this circumstance might have given great offence to weak minds, if his work had been published, but it never made its appearance. I spent that evening at his house, and reached Burlington next morning.

I had the mortification to learn, that the usual passage boats had set off some time before my arrival. This was on a Saturday, and there would not be a similar opportunity before the following Tuesday. I instantly returned towards an old woman's house, who had sold me some gingerbread, which I intended to have ate upon the water, and of her demanded what was to be done? She invited me to lodge with her, until some new occasion should

present itself, of embarking on board a vessel bound for Philadelphia, being greatly fatigued with travelling so far on foot, I accepted her kind offer. When she heard that I was a printer, she endeavoured to prevail upon me to remain at Burlington, in order to follow my trade there. She was ignorant of the sums to be advanced, and the capital necessary for carrying it on! I found true hospitality under her roof. She gave me, with a very good grace, a dinner composed of ox-cheek, and would accept nothing in return, but a pint of ale.

I thought myself fixed here until next Tuesday, but happening to walk that very evening on the banks of the river, I perceived a boat bound to Philadelphia, in which there was a great number of passengers. They received me instantly on board, and as there was little or no wind, we made use of our oars. Not being able to descry the city, towards midnight several of our company assured us that we had passed it, and would row no longer, the others not being positive as to our situation, it was decided that we should proceed no farther, we accordingly made towards the shore, entered a creek, and landed near an old palisade, the wood of which served us to make a fire, as the night (it being in the month of October) was exceedingly cold.

We remained here until day light, a person in company then recollected that the place where we had spent the night, was called Sooper's Creek, a little above Philadelphia, which we soon after discovered.

covered. We arrived there on Sunday, about eight or nine o'clock in the morning, and landed at the Quay in Market-Street

I have thus entered into all the minute details of the voyage, and I shall describe, in the same manner, whatever occurred to me, on my first arrival in that city, so that you may be enabled to compare such very unlikely beginnings with the figure I afterwards made there.

C H A P III

Franklin arrives at Philadelphia, destitute both of Money and Friends—He purchases some Bread, which he eats in the Street—in this Situation he has a glimpse of his future Wife—He is employed in a Printing-House—Some Account of Kames his Master—He becomes acquainted with the Governor of Pennsylvania—Goes back to Bes'en—Returns to Philadelphia—Is accompanied by Collins—Their Quarrel and Separation.

WHEN I arrived at Philadelphia, I was in my working dress, my best clothes being in my trunk, which was to come round from New-York, by sea. I was besides very dirty, in consequence of being so long in the boat; my pockets too were crammed with shirts and stockings, and I am sure that I must have made a very strange figure

To add to my mortification, I did not know a single person in the town, and was even ignorant where I could find a lodging. I was extremely fatigued on account of having rowed during the whole night, I was also very hungry, and all the money I had in the world, consisted of a single dollar, and

a shilling in half-pence, which I gave to the boatmen. They refused it at first, because I had helped them, but I insisted on their accepting it. A man is sometimes more generous when he has but little money, than when he has a great deal. The reason

reason of this perhaps is, that on such an occasion he is desirous of concealing his poverty.

I proceeded towards the end of the street, examining both sides of it at the same time, with the utmost attention, until I arrived at Market-Street, where I met a boy carrying some bread in his hand. I had often made an entire meal of dry bread. I asked him where he had purchased it, and went straight to the baker's, which he pointed out with his finger. I instantly called for two or three biscuits, thinking to find some of the same species we had at Boston, but I was informed that none of that kind was to be found at Philadelphia. I then asked for a three-penny loaf, but I was told that they had not any at that price. Being entirely ignorant of the different prices and kinds of bread made in this part of the country, I desired them to give me three-pence worth of bread, of whatever sort they pleased. On this I got three large loaves; I was surpris'd at receiving so many, but took them nevertheless, and having no empty room in my pockets, I continued my walk, with a loaf under each arm, as to the other, I held it in my hand while I ate it. In this manner I pass'd along Market-Street, arriv'd at Fourth-Street, and paraded before the house of Mr. Read, the father of the young woman who was afterwards my wife. She happen'd at that very moment to be at the door, and had good reason to think that I made a very fantastical appearance.

After this I turned the corner into Chestnut-Street, eating my bread all the way, and having thus made

a circuit, I found myself once more upon the Quay in Market-Street, within a few yards of the boat in which I had arrived. I descended a few steps in order to drink some of the water of the river, and finding myself entirely satisfied with my first loaf, I bestowed the other two on a woman, who, with her son, had been my companions on our excursion by water.

Being now refreshed, I again wandered along the street. It was then filled with a number of persons, all of whom were very neatly dressed, and walked after one another, in a decent and orderly manner, always keeping the same side of the way. I immediately joined and accompanied them to the Quaker's meeting-house, near the Market. I sat down as the others did, and after having spent some time in looking around me, without hearing a single word uttered, being exceedingly fatigued with my labour, and want of rest during the preceeding night, I fell into a profound sleep. I remained in this situation until the assembly separated, when one of the assistants had the complaisance to awaken me. This consequently was the first house which I entered, or in which I slept, after my arrival in Philadelphia.

I now once more regained the street, and continued to walk along the side of the river; during my progress I attentively examined the faces of all the passers whom I met, and at length fixed upon a young Quaker, whose physiognomy pleased me: I accordingly accosted and besought him to inform me where a stranger might be able to find a lodging?

We

We were then exactly opposite the sign of the *Three Sailors*. "They receive strangers there," says he, pointing out the place at the same time with his finger, "but the house is not of good repute, if thou wilt accompany me, I will show thee a better one." He accordingly conducted me to the *Crooked Billet* in Water-Street.

There I ordered a dinner, and while I was eating it, the people of the house put several questions to me. My youth and appearance led them to suppose that I was a fugitive. After dinner my inclination to sleep returned again; a bed was accordingly prepared for me; I cast myself upon it, without undressing, and slept till six o'clock at night, when they awakened and called me to supper. After that I returned to bed at a very early hour, and slept without interruption, until the next morning.

As soon as I arose I dressed myself as well as possible, and repaired to the house of Andrew Bradford, the printer. I found his father, whom I had seen at New-York, in the shop, and who by making the journey on horse back, had arrived before me at Philadelphia. He presented me to his son, who received me in a very kind manner, and invited me to breakfast, but he informed me, that he had no occasion for a workman at that time, being provided with one a little before. He added that there was another printer of the name of Keimer in the town, who had just entered into business, and who might perhaps employ me, and in case of his refusing to do so, he himself would most willingly give me a lodging, and

a little work from time to time, until something better might occur.

The old man offered of his own accord to conduct me to the new printer's, and when we had arrived there, "Neighbour," says he to him, "I have brought you a young man of your profession; perhaps you may stand in need of his services." Keimer put a few questions to me, placed a *composing stick* in my hand, in order to see in what manner I worked, and then said that he would give me employment in a short time, but that at present he had no occasion for me.

Looking upon old Bradford to be a person who wished him well, and was desirous to serve him, he began to converse with him about his present enterprise, and his future prospects. Bradford was careful not to discover himself to be the father of the other printer, and as soon as Keimer told him, that he hoped in a short time to have the greatest part of the business of the town in his own hands, he by means of several cunning interrogations and artificial doubts, led him to disclose the foundation of his hopes, and the manner in which he intended to proceed. I was present at, and heard the whole of this conversation, and I was not long in discovering that one of them was an old fox, and the other a silly novice. Bradford soon after departed and left me with Keimer, who was exceedingly surprised when I informed him what and who the old man was.

I found that Keimer's printing utensils consisted of an old damaged press, and a second-hand fount of
English

English types, pretty much used, and which he himself employed at that very time in composing an elegy on Aquila Rose, whom I have mentioned before.

This young man, who, to great abilities, united a most excellent character, had been much beloved and esteemed in the town. He was secretary to the assembly, and had a very fine turn for poetry. Keimer also made verses, but they did not rise above mediocrity. He could not, indeed, be said with propriety, to *write* verses, for it was customary with him to compose them with his types, just as they struck his imagination, and as he worked without any copy, had no more than one pair of cases, and the elegy was likely to occupy all his *letter*, it was impossible for any one to assist him. I undertook to put his press, of which he had not as yet made any use, and concerning which he was entirely ignorant, into proper order, and having promised to come back and work off his elegy, as soon as it should be ready, I returned to Mr. Bradford's, who gave me some trifle to employ myself upon for the moment, and also my bed and board.

A few days after this, Keimer sent for me, in order to work off his elegy. He had by that time procured another pair of cases, and a pamphlet to re-print, upon which he instantly employed me.

Both the printers of Philadelphia appeared to me to be totally destitute of the qualities necessary to insure success in their profession. Bradford had never been brought up to the business, and was exceedingly illiterate. Keimer was a little better educated, but he

he was no more than a simple compositor, and understood nothing at all of press-work. He had been one of the *French Prophets*, and he knew how to imitate their supernatural agitations. At this period of our acquaintance, he professed no particular religion whatever, but a little of all at times, he was very ignorant of the world, and had a great deal of guile in his heart, as I had occasion afterwards to discover.

Kenner was very unhappy, that I lodged at Bradford's, while I worked for him. He was indeed in possession of a whole house, but it was entirely destitute of moveables, so that it was impossible for him to accommodate me there. He procured me a lodging, however, at Mr. Read's, whom I mentioned before, and who was the landlord of his house.

My trunk and effects, having arrived at this time, I dressed myself so as to appear before Miss Read, in a better plight than when chance first discovered me to her, eating a loaf, and wandering along the streets.

I now began to form an acquaintance among such of the young men in the town as were fond of reading, and I spent many very agreeable nights in their company, I was at the same time enabled to gain a good deal of money by my industry, and to live very well and very contented, thanks to my frugality. Thus I endeavoured to forget Boston as much as possible, and did not wish that the place of my nativity should be known to any person except my friend Collins, with whom I kept up a constant correspondence, and who faithfully preserved my secret.

A cir-

A circumstance, however, occurred soon after that made me return home much sooner than I had at first proposed. I had a brother-in-law of the name of Robert Holmes who was master of a sloop, employed as a coaster between Boston and the Delaware. Finding himself at Newcastle, forty miles below Philadelphia, he there happened to hear of me, and wrote me a letter, in which he informed me of the sorrow, which my precipitate departure from Boston had occasioned to my parents, and of the great affection they still entertained towards me, assuring me at the same time, that every thing would be accommodated to my entire satisfaction provided I returned, a proceeding which he most earnestly exhorted me to. In my reply to his letter, I thanked him for his good advice, but I at the same time specified the reasons which had induced me to leave Boston, with so much force and precision, that he was convinced I was not so much in the wrong as he had at first imagined.

Sir William Keith, governor of the Province, was at this very time at Newcastle. Captain Holmes happening accidentally to be in his company, when he received my letter, took advantage of that opportunity to speak warmly in my favour, and even to show it to him. The governor read it, and appeared astonished, when he learned my extreme youth. He observed that I was a young man, of whom great expectations might be justly formed; that I ought to be encouraged, that the printers in Philadelphia were all very ignorant in respect to their
business,

business, that if I were established there, there could be no manner of doubt of my success, and that for his part he would employ me to print for the government, and would do me every other service in his power. My brother-in-law afterwards recounted all these particulars to me at Boston, but I was entirely ignorant of them at the time

One day as Keimer and I happened to be at work together near the window, we perceived the governor and another gentleman, who proved to be Colonel French of Newcastle, both very elegantly dressed. They came straight towards our house, and in a few seconds we heard them both at the door. Keimer thinking the visit intended for him, immediately went down stairs to receive them, but the governor, after asking for me, ascended to the apartment where I was stationed, and with a politeness and condescension to which I had been hitherto unaccustomed, paid me many compliments, desired to be better acquainted with me, reproached me for not making myself known to him on my arrival, and insisted on my accompanying him to a tavern in order to drink a glass of Madeira with him and the Colonel.

I must acknowledge that I was not a little surprised at the honour now done me; and as for Keimer, he appeared in a state of stupefaction.

I, however, accompanied the governor and his friend, to a tavern at the corner of Third street, where he proposed over a glass of wine, that I should establish a printing house. He insisted on the probability

bability of my success, and both he and Colonel French assured me, that I might depend upon their influence and protection, and that they would unite their efforts, in order to procure me all the public business of this and the adjacent province. When I expressed my doubts of my father's assisting me in this enterprize, Sir William told me, that he would give me a letter to him, and that he had no manner of doubt but that he would comply with his request. It was accordingly determined that I should return to Boston by the first vessel that sailed for that port, with a letter of recommendation from the governor to my father. In the mean time, it was agreed, that this project should remain secret, and that I should continue to work for Keimer as usual.

The governor invited me to dine with him, from time to time ; I looked upon this as a very great honour, and I was so much the more sensible of it, as he conversed with me in the most affable, familiar, and amicable manner that could be imagined.

Towards the conclusion of the month of April, 1724, a small vessel presented itself for Boston, on this I took leave of Keimer, as if my intentions had been merely to return in order to see my parents. The governor presented me with a long letter, in which he communicated the most flattering accounts of me to my father, and strongly recommended the project of establishing me at Philadelphia, a plan which, according to his opinion, could not fail to make my fortune,

In descending the river our vessel struck upon a sand bank, and sprung a leak, the weather was also stormy, and the sea tempestuous in short we were obliged to make use of the pump without intermission, I myself working at it in my turn. We arrived, however, safe and sound at Boston, at the end of fifteen days.

I had been absent seven whole months, and during all that time, my parents had heard nothing of me, for my brother in law Holmes was not as yet returned, and had not written any thing to my friends concerning me. My unexpected appearance astonished the whole family. All, however, except my brother, were charmed at my return, and came to bid me welcome. I went to see him at his Printing-office, I was much better dressed than I had ever been during the time I was in his service. I had on a complete new suit of clothes, a watch and upwards of five guineas of ready money in my pocket. He did not receive me very kindly, for after examining me from head to foot, he applied himself again to his work.

The workmen asked me with great eagerness, where I had been? what sort of a country it was? and how I liked it? I boasted much of Philadelphia, and the happy life that I led there, expressing at the same time my earnest intention of returning. One of them having enquired what kind of money was common there, I instantly drew forth a whole handful of silver, and spread it before them, this circumstance wonderfully gratified their curiosity, paper money alone
being

being in circulation at Boston. I did not fail after this to produce my watch, but, at length, perceiving my brother to be in a bad humour, I gave them a dollar to drink my health and took my leave. This visit on my part, piqued him exceedingly, for, when my mother, a short time afterwards, spoke of a reconciliation, and of the desire she had to see us live together for the future, as brothers, he informed her, that I had insulted him in such a gross manner before his workmen, that he would not either forget or forgive it, during the whole course of his life, but in this he deceived himself greatly.

The governor's letter, appeared to occasion some surprise to my father; he, however, spoke to me, but little on that subject. At the end of a few days, Captain Holmes being returned, he shewed it to him, asked if he knew Sir William Keith? and enquired what sort of a man he was? adding, that, in his opinion, he had but very little discernment to think of an establishment for a boy, who still wanted three years of being arrived at that age, when he could be properly termed a man.

Holmes said every thing in his power, in favour of the project, but my father insisted in the most decisive manner on the incongruity of the plan, and at length positively refused to countenance it

After this, he wrote a civil letter to Sir William, in which he returned him many thanks for the patronage and protection he had so obligingly offered to his son, but refused to assist me, at least for the present, in the plan that had

been pointed out, because, according to his opinion, I was yet too young to be entrusted with the management of such an important enterprise, more especially as the necessary preparations would require a considerable capital.

My old friend Collins, who was a clerk in the Post Office, charmed with the accounts which I had given him of Philadelphia, conceived a prodigious inclination to go and reside there also, and while I was waiting for my father's determination, he set off before me by land for Rhode Island, ordering his books, which formed an excellent collection of tracts on Natural Philosophy and the Mathematics, to be carried along with my baggage to New York, where he proposed to wait for me.

Although my father did not relish the proposition made to him by Sir William, he was yet exceedingly pleased that I had obtained the patronage and recommendation of a person of his rank, and that my industry and œconomy had enabled me to equip myself in such a respectable manner, in so short a time.

Seeing no probability of an agreement between my brother and myself, after consenting to my return to Philadelphia, he advised me to endeavour to acquire the regard of all the world, to treat every body with respect, and above all things to avoid satire and sarcasm, to which he thought that I had but too great an inclination, adding, that with prudence, œconomy, and perseverance, I might be able to save a sufficient quantity of money, before I was twenty-one years of age, to establish myself in business.

ness, and that if I then should be in want of a small sum, he would readily undertake to supply me. This was all I was able to obtain, except a few trifling presents which he and my mother gave me, in token of their affection.

I now embarked once more for New-York, authorised, at length, with their approbation and benediction. The sloop which I was on board, having touched at Newport, Rhode-Island, I paid a visit to my brother John, who had been married and settled there for some years.

He had always loved, and now received me with great affection. One of his friends, of the name of Vernon, happening to have a debt of about thirty-six pounds sterling due to him in Pennsylvania, requested me to get payment of it and to keep the money till he should inform me how to employ it, he accordingly gave me an order for that purpose. This affair occasioned me much uneasiness in the sequel.

At Newport we took on board a number of passengers, among whom were two young women, who were acquainted with each other, and a female Quaker, who was very grave, and very sensible. I evinced an inclination to do her every service in my power, I suppose she was conscious of my good intentions, and in consequence took an interest in every thing that concerned me. In fine, when she perceived that a familiarity had taken place, and seemed to increase daily, between the two other female passengers and me, which they endeavoured by all manner

of means to encourage, she took me apart, and one afternoon spoke to me as follows :

“ Young man, I am quite unhappy about thee ,
“ thou hast no relations to watch over thy conduct,
“ and thou dost not seem to be much acquainted
“ with the world, and with those snares to which thy
“ youth and inexperience render thee liable ! Thou
“ mayest depend on what I am about to tell thee
“ These young women lead a disorderly life, I perceive it in all their actions. If thou art not upon
“ thy guard, they will draw thee into some scrape
“ They are strangers to thee. I advise thee, therefore,
“ by the friendly interest, which I take in thy preservation, not to form any acquaintance with
“ them.”

As I did not at first appear to think so badly of them, as she did, she recounted a number of circumstances to me, which she had either seen or heard, and which, although they had escaped my attention, convinced me that she was entirely in the right. I accordingly thanked her for her obliging advice, and promised to follow her counsels.

When we arrived at New-York, they told me where they resided, and requested me to go and see them. I did not, however, accept of their invitation, and in this I was perfectly right, for, on the next day, the captain perceiving that he had lost a silver spoon, and some other trifles, which were scattered about in the cabin, and knowing that these two women were prostitutes, he obtained a search warrant, went to their apartments, and having there discovered the

stolen

stolen goods, he delivered them over to the civil power, an order to be punished according to law. Thus after having escaped a sunken rock, on which the sloop struck in her passage, I also escaped in my own person from an infinitely more perilous shoal!

I found my old friend Collins at New-York; he had arrived there some time before me, we had been intimate ever since our infancy, we had read the same books, and pursued the same studies together; but he had the advantage of being able to give up more of his time to those pursuits, and to a passion for the mathematics, in which science he left me far behind him.

When I resided at Boston, I was accustomed to spend most of my leisure hours in company with him. He was at that time a sober and industrious young man. His knowledge had conciliated general esteem, both among the clergy and laity, and he seemed to promise to make a great figure in society. But, during my absence, he had unfortunately encouraged a passion for strong liquors, brandy in particular, and I learned not only from the report of others, but from his own confession, that he had got drunk every day since his arrival at New-York, and had conducted himself in a very extravagant and disorderly manner. He had also become fond of play, and lost all his money, so that I was obliged to ~~pay~~ pay his bill for him at the inn in which he had resided, and even to defray all his expences during the journey, this was a very great hardship upon me.

Mr. Burnet, who was at that time Governor of New-York, having heard the captain observe, that a young man, a passenger on board his vessel, had a great number of books, requested him to conduct me to his house. I accepted the invitation, and would have carried Collins along with me, if he had been sober. The governor received me with great politeness, shewed me his library, which was a very large one, and we talked a long time together about books and authors. This was the second governor who had honoured me with his attention; and to a poor boy, as I at that time was, these little adventures did not fail to be uncommonly agreeable.

We now set off for Philadelphia. I procured the money that was due to Vernon, upon the road, and but for the aid of this supply we should have been unable, without great difficulty, to have performed our journey.

Collins was desirous of being employed in some merchant's counting-house, but although he had many excellent recommenders, either his breath or his countenance apparently betrayed the bad habits that he had contracted, for he did not succeed in any of his applications, so that he continued to lodge and board along with me, and at my expence.

Knowing that I was in possession of Vernon's money, he was continually begging a loan of part of it, always promising to reimburse me the moment he found employment. In time, he prevailed upon me to give him so much of it that I became exceedingly uneasy at the idea of what I should do, in case I should
be

be obliged to restore the sum. His attachment for liquor did not in the least abate, and this circumstance contributed not a little to occasion a great coolness, and even disagreement between us, for when he had drank a little too much, he was exceedingly quarrelsome.

Happening one day to be in a boat on the Delaware, with some other young men, he refused to row in his turn.

"You shall row me home," said he, "to my lodgings." "We shall not row you an inch," replied I, "You shall," added he, "or else remain all night upon the water!" "Come! come!" cried our companions, "what does it signify whether he rows or not?"

Being, however, exceedingly exasperated against him, on account of his mean conduct, I continued to refuse to proceed any farther, on this, he swore that if I did not row, he would throw me over-board. He accordingly proceeded towards me, walking at the same time across the benches.

As soon as he was within reach of me, I stretched out my hand, seized hold of him by the breeches, and rising up briskly at the same time, I threw him head-foremost into the river. I well knew that he was a good swimmer, I was not therefore in the least apprehension for his life, in the mean while, before he was able to recover himself and board the boat, we got to a little distance and entirely out of his reach, by means of our oars.

Every time that he approached towards us, we asked him, if he would row ? and we gave him at the same time a few strokes with our oars, in order to oblige him to desist from boarding us. He was nearly choaked with the excess of his rage, and obstinately refused to promise to assist us. Perceiving that his strength began to fail, we at length hauled him into the boat, and brought him home quite wet to his lodgings. After this adventure, our coolness augmented daily.

At length a captain of a vessel who traded to the West-Indies, and who was commissioned to procure a tutor for the son of a rich planter in Barbadoes, happening to fall in with him, proposed to carry him to that island, in order to fill that situation. He accepted this offer and left me, with a promise to remit me part of his salary by way of repayment of the sum he stood indebted to me, but I never afterwards received any intelligence whatever concerning him.

C H A P. IV.

*Our Author spends a Sum of Money intrusted to his Care—
 Gives an Acount relative to Cod-Fish—Project for estab-
 lishing a new Sect—Some Account of a Vegetable Diet—
 A Poetical Contest—He is still patronised by the Governor—
 Departs from Philadelphia—Is grossly deceived by his Pa-
 tion—Arrives in London—Presents his Letters of Credit—
 Is extremely uneasy relative to his future Conduct in Life
 —Some Account of Governor Sir William Keith.*

THE appropriation of the sum of money deposited in my hands, and belonging to Mr. Vernon, was one of the first grand errors in my life, and this circumstance fully proves that my father was not much deceived in his judgment, when he supposed me to be as yet too young to be entrusted with the management of any business of importance. Sir William Keith, however, on reading his letter, observed that he was by far too prudent, that there was a great difference between individuals, and, that as discretion did not always accompany maturity of years, so youth on the contrary was not always deprived of it.

“ Since he will not contribute to your establish-
 “ ment, (continues he,) I will undertake to do it my-
 “ self. Give me a list of the various articles which
 “ are necessary to be brought from England, and I
 “ will send for them directly; you may reim-
 “ burse me, whenever your situation permits you.

“ I

“ I am determin'd to have a good printer here, and

“ I am sure that you will succeed.”

He spoke this with such an appearance of cordiality and friendship, that I did not doubt for a single moment of the sincerity of his professions. I had hitherto been silent in Philadelphia, relative to his promises, and I still continued to keep them a secret. If it had been known that I relied upon the governor's word, doubtless I should have found some friend better acquainted with his character than myself, who would have advised me not to have trusted to it, for I learned in the end, that he was well known to be very liberal in promises, but that he always forgot to fulfil them. Having never solicited any favour from him, how was it possible for me to have divined that his professions were insincere? I actually looked upon him as the best man in the whole world.

I soon after presented him with a list of the articles necessary for a small printing-house, the expence of which might amount, according to my calculation, to about £.100 sterling. He approved of every thing, but asked me at the same time, if my presence would not be necessary in England, in order to superintend the completion of his order, to inspect and choose the letter-press, and to take care that every article should be excellent in its kind? “ You will also be
“ able, (adds he,) to form a connexion there, and
“ establish a correspondence in the book and paper
“ lines ”

I acknowledged that such a scheme would be exceedingly advantageous, “ That being the case,” says

he, "be fure to get every thing ready, in order to
"proceed with the Anna."

This was the annual vessel, and the only one at that time which made regular voyages between London and Philadelphia, but as some months would elapse previous to the sailing of the Anna, I continued to work with Keimer. I was not, however, without great uneasiness in respect to the sums which Collins had borrowed of me; indeed I experienced the most violent and continual fears in regard to Vernon, who, however, very luckily for me, did not demand his money until some years afterwards.

I believe that I have omitted a little incident in the recital of my first voyage from Boston to Philadelphia, which I shall now relate, because it will not be altogether misplaced here.

During a calm, which stopped us exactly opposite Block-island, our sailors made the necessary preparations in order to catch some cod. Until that moment, I had persisted in my resolution of never eating any thing that had life in it, and upon this occasion, full of the ideas of my master Tryon, I looked upon the taking of every fish, as a species of wanton murder, committed without any manner of provocation whatever, because not one of them had ever done, or could ever do, the least possible evil to any person, which could justify so cruel a massacre! This manner of reasoning seemed to me to be unanswerable, but I had formerly been a great lover of fish; and when it came out of the frying pan, it had a most inviting smell!

I balanced

I balanced for some time between my principles and my appetite, until I began to recollect, that on cutting up these very cod, I had perceived a multitude of little fish, taken out of their stomachs. On this I instantly said to myself, "If you thus devour one another, I see no manner of reason why we should not eat you!"

In consequence of this, I instantly sat down to the cod-fish, with a most excellent appetite, and have continued ever since to eat like the rest of the world, returning however, from time to time, and by intervals, to a vegetable diet.

How commodious it is to be a *reasonable creature*, who knows either how to find, or to invent arguments for justifying every thing, he is desirous of doing!

I lived in great friendship with Keimer, and we agreed exceedingly, because he never once dreamed of my project of setting up in business for myself. He still preserved a great part of his enthusiasm, and was uncommonly fond of argument, we accordingly had frequent disputations together. I was so accustomed to puzzle him with my Socratic method, and had confounded him so often by my questions, which at first appeared to be very far distant from the point in agitation, and yet led to it, insensibly embarrassing him in difficulties, and contradiction, which he could not get rid of, that he at length became ridiculously circumspect. He accordingly would never make any reply to the most simple and familiar question,

question, without first asking me, "What do you pretend to infer from that?"

Notwithstanding this, he had formed such a high idea of my ability in refuting the arguments of an adversary, that he seriously proposed to me, to be his colleague in a project he had formed of establishing a new sect. He was to preach the doctrines, and it was to be my business to confound all our opponents. However, when he began to explain himself to me, relative to his *dogmas*, I perceived a great number of whimsical conceits, which I refused to allow, at least, unless my own opinions were permitted to be mixed with them, in short, I would not consent to any thing if he did not agree to adopt some of my principles.

Keimer wore his beard long, because it is said in the law of Moses, "Thou shalt not cut the corners of thy beard." He also strictly observed the sabbath or the seventh-day, and these, according to him, were two essential points.

They both displeased me, notwithstanding this, I consented to admit them upon the express condition, that he would agree to establish it as a precept, not to use any food appertaining to the animal kingdom. He doubted greatly whether his constitution would be able to support such a *regimen*, but I assured him on the contrary, that it would greatly contribute to the establishment of his health.

He was naturally an epicure, and I was determined to do every thing in my power in order to mortify his appetites.

He

He consented at length to try the *regimen* proposed, and I agreed to keep him company. We accordingly submitted ourselves to it, during three whole months.

A woman in the neighbourhood, purchased, cooked, and brought us our victuals ; I gave her a list of upwards of forty dishes, which she was to prepare for us at different times, and into the composition of which, neither fish nor flesh was admitted. This fantastical mode of life was the more agreeable to me, at this time, because it was extremely cheap, for the expences of our house-keeping did not exceed eighteen-pence a week.

I have since kept *Lent* many times in the same manner, and nearly with the utmost possible strictness, and I have for the most part suddenly substituted this *regimen* to my ordinary food, without experiencing the least inconvenience, this circumstance makes me look upon the advice generally given of accustoming one'sself by degrees to the change of diet, as a matter of very little importance.

I continued in good health and spirits, but poor Keimer suffered greatly. He became in a short time quite weary of the enterprize, and began to sigh after the *flesh-pots* of Egypt.

At length he ordered a sucking pig to be roasted, and invited me, along with two females of our acquaintance, to dine with him ; but the pig having been brought home a little sooner than was expected, he could not resist the temptation arising from so delicious

cious a morsel, and actually devoured the whole, before our arrival.

In the mean time I paid great attention to Miss Read. I had much affection and esteem for her, and I had some reason to believe that she entertained similar sentiments in regard to me. But we were both very young, neither of us being much above eighteen years of age, and as I was upon the point of taking a long voyage, her mother thought that it would not be prudent to permit our attachment to go any farther lengths at present, because if we were to be married, it would be much more convenient that this ceremony should take place after my return, when, as I had given out, I was to be established in business for myself. Perhaps she also thought that my expectations were not so well founded as I imagined.

My principal companions at this time, were Charles Osborne, Joseph Watson, and James Ralph, all of them very fond of reading. The two first were clerks to, and lived with Mr. Charles Brockden, one the principal attornies in the town; the other was a clerk in a merchant's counting-house.

Watson was a young man of great integrity, very pious and sensible. The others were a little more relaxed in regard to their religious principles, particularly Ralph, whose faith as well as that of Collins, had been staggered by myself, they both made me suffer sufficiently afterwards, by way of punishment for this conduct. Osborne possessed great sensibility, was frank and open in his conduct, and exceedingly attached to
his

his friends, but he affected too much to be a critic in regard to literature

Ralph was witty, genteel in his manners, and extremely eloquent. I never, in the whole course of my life, met with a more agreeable speaker. Both of them were passionately attached to poetry, and had begun to compose little sonnets, &c

We four were accustomed to take very agreeable walks every Sunday, in the woods bordering on the Schuylkill. We read in common, and then conferred on the subject before us. Ralph seemed determined to give himself entirely up to the study of poetry. He flattered himself that he should be able to make great progress in this career, and even to acquire a fortune by means of it. He pretended that the greatest poets, on their first attempting to write, had committed as many mistakes as he himself had done.

Osborne endeavoured to dissuade him from it, assuring him at the same time, that he did not possess a poetical genius, and advised him above all things, to stick by the profession to which he had been brought up.

“ In the mercantile line,” said he, “ you will be able by means of your diligence and assiduity, even without a capital, to procure employment as a factor, and you may thus, in time, acquire sufficient stock to begin trade with upon your own account.”

As for me, I approved greatly that he should amuse himself from time to time with poetry, but thought that this should be done merely with a view to attain perfection in the language.

It was one day proposed, that each of us, at the next interview, should produce a piece of his own composition in verse. Our object in this experiment was to improve each other, by means of our observations, our criticisms, and our mutual corrections, and as the language and expression was all we had in view, we excluded every idea of invention, agreeing that our common task should be a version of the eighteenth Psalm, in which the descent of the Divinity is described.

The epoch of our interview was just at hand, when Ralph called upon me, and told me that his task was prepared. I informed him that I had been too indolent to perform mine, because, having but little inclination towards that species of literature, I had neglected to do any thing. On this, he produced the verses which he had composed, and asked me what I thought of them. I approved of them highly, because they appeared to me to possess great and extraordinary merit.

On this he addressed me thus. "Osborne will
"never allow the least credit to any thing of my
"composition, his envy always dictates a thou-
"sand ill-natured criticisms upon it. He is not so
"jealous of you; I desire therefore that you will
"take this, and present it as your own. I shall pre-
"tend not to have had time, and consequently shall
"not produce any thing: We shall then see what he
"says on this subject." I immediately consented to this little piece of roguery, and instantly transcribed

Ralph's task, in order to avoid the possibility of detection.

The day at length arrives, and we repair to the place of rendezvous.

Watson's work was the first that was read. It possessed some beauties, but many defects. We then perused Osborne's, it was far superior; Ralph did great justice to it, for while he animadverted upon a few faults, he applauded its numerous perfections. He had nothing to produce, and it was now my turn.

I made a number of difficulties, and seemed desirous of being excused, I had not sufficient time to make the proper corrections, to polish the style, &c. &c. None of my apologies were, however, admitted; it was necessary that I should produce my composition, I accordingly complied; it was read over and over again. Watson and Osborne immediately renounced every idea of competition, and joined in applauding it. Ralph alone made a few criticisms, and proposed some corrections, but I strenuously defended my manuscript. Osborne was violent against Ralph, and told him, that he was no better calculated to criticise than to write verses, and that he had equally failed in the corrections he had hazarded, and the poetry he had promised, but neglected to produce.

As soon as the others had left me in order to return home, Osborne expressed himself still more strongly in favour of what he imagined to be my production. He pretended to have been hitherto re-
strained

strained by fear, lest I should think he meant to flatter me.

“But who would have imagined,” added he, “that Franklin was capable of such a composition ! What painting ! What strength ! What fire ! He has actually surpassed the original ! In his ordinary conversation he does not appear to give himself any trouble about the choice of his words ; he even hesitates, and finds it difficult to express his meaning, and yet, good God ! how he writes !”

At our next meeting, Ralph informed Osborne of the trick we had played him, and he was rallied by us all on the occasion.

This adventure confirmed Ralph in his resolution of becoming a poet. I did every thing in my power in order to dissuade him from it, but he continued to make verses, until he read Pope, and this entirely cured him of his passion for the Muses ; he, however, became a most excellent prose writer.

I shall speak more about him by and by, but as I may not perhaps have occasion to say any thing concerning the other two, I shall only observe here, that Watson died in my arms a few years after. He was exceedingly regretted ; for he was the most amiable of all our society. Osborne went to the West Indies, where he became a famous advocate, and acquired a great deal of money, but he was cut off at a very early period of his life. We seriously agreed together, that whichever of us two died first, should, if possible, return, and make an amicable visit to the survivor, in order to inform him fully in regard to a fu-

ture state.—But he has never as yet fulfilled his engagement.

The governor appeared to be much delighted with my company, and invited me frequently to his house. He still continued to speak of his intention of establishing me in business, as a thing decided upon. I was to carry along with me letters of recommendation to several of his friends, and especially a letter of credit, in order to procure me my printing-press, types, paper, &c. &c. He put off the delivery of these letters from time to time, and always promised me that they should be ready when I called next, but on my appearance something continually interfered so as to prevent their delivery.

These reiterated delays always took place, until the vessel, the departure of which had been often procrastinated, was at length ready to sail, on that occasion I once more waited upon Sir William, in order to take my leave, and receive my dispatches. His secretary, Dr Bird, came to me, and informed me, that the governor was extremely busy, at present, but that he would be at Newcastle, before the vessel could possibly drop down there, and that then I might depend upon the letters being delivered to me.

Ralph was determined to accompany me in this voyage, although he was married and had a child. It was believed that he undertook it merely with a design of establishing a correspondence in England, and of procuring merchandize, in order to be sold by commission; but I afterwards discovered, that
having

having some occasion to complain of his wife's family, he was determined to leave her with them, and resolved never more to return to America.

After having taken leave of my friends and made an exchange of vows with Miss Read, I left Philadelphia.

The vessel cast anchor at Newcastle, the governor was there, and I repaired to his house. His secretary, who received me with great politeness, informed me from him, that I could not see him then, being engaged in business of the utmost importance, but that he would send my letters on board, and that he wished me a good voyage, and speedy return, &c. &c.

I now repaired on board the vessel, exceedingly astonished, but yet without conceiving the least doubt, as to his intentions.

Mr. Andrew Hamilton, a famous advocate of Philadelphia, had taken a passage on board the same ship for himself and his son, and in conjunction with Mr. Denham, a quaker merchant, and Messrs. Oniam and Russel, the owners of an iron work in Maryland, had hired the great cabin; so that Ralph and I were obliged to lie along with the sailors, and as we were unknown to any person in the vessel, we were treated like the common men.

Mr. Hamilton and his son James, who was afterwards governor, happened to return from Newcastle to Philadelphia, being recalled at a great expence, in order to plead a cause relative to a vessel that had been seized, so that they did not proceed on the voyage.

A very short time before we set sail, Colonel French came on board, and shewed me many civilities ; from that moment a great deal more attention was paid to me , and the other passengers having invited me and my friend Ralph to occupy the beds which the Messrs. Hamiltons were to have slept in, we accepted of their offer without any difficulty, and found ourselves in a far more commodious situation than we had hitherto experienced.

Having learned that Colonel French had brought on board the governor's dispatches, I asked the captain for the letters which were to be intrusted to my care. He informed me they had been all put together in the letter bag, which he could not then untie, but added, that before their arrival in England, I should most undoubtedly receive them. I was satisfied for the moment with this answer, and we soon after proceeded on our voyage.

The passengers in the great cabin were of a very sociable disposition, and we were exceedingly lucky in regard to provisions, for we not only had our own, but a large quantity of poultry, &c. which Mr. Hamilton had left on board. In the course of the passage, Mr. Denham contracted a friendship for me, which ended but with his life. In other respects our voyage was not very pleasant, for we had exceedingly disagreeable weather.

When we arrived in the Channel, the captain kept his word with me, and gave me permission to search the bag for the governor's letters. I did not find a single one upon which my name was written, or on

which it was indicated that it was to be conveyed by my means. I picked out six or seven however, which I judged by the directions to be those which had been promised me, more especially as one of them was addressed to Baskerville, the King's printer, and another to a stationer, who was the first person whom I met with on my arrival. I accordingly presented it to him as coming from Governor Keith.

"I am not acquainted with the man you mean," says he, but on opening the letter, he exclaimed, "O 'it is from Reddlesden!' I have known for some time past that he is a great rascal, and I neither wish to have any connection with, nor receive any letters from him." Having said this, he instantly put the letter in question into my hand, turned round upon his heel, and left me in order to serve some of his customers.

I was quite astonished at discovering that this letter was not written by the governor, and recalling now, for the first time, a variety of circumstances to my memory, I began at length to doubt of his sincerity. I waited therefore upon my friend Denham, and explained the whole affair. He instantly made me acquainted with governor Keith's character, and informed me that there was not the least probability that he had written a single line in my favour. He added, that no one who was acquainted with him ever trusted to his word, and he laughed heartily at my idea of receiving a letter of credit, from a person who could procure no credit for himself.

As I evinced some uneasiness relative to the part I had now to take, he advised me to endeavour to find employment in my own profession. "You will here," says he, "be sure to add to your stock of knowledge, and this circumstance will enable you to establish yourself more advantageously, on your return to America."

We were as much convinced as the stationer was, that lawyer Riddlefden was a great rogue. He had nearly ruined Miss Read's father, by prevailing upon him to become surety for him. We also discovered by this letter, that he had entered into a secret intrigue against Mr. Hamilton, who he supposed was gone to Europe in the same ship with us, and that the governor was privy to, and a party in the plot.

Denham, who was one of Hamilton's friends, was of opinion, that he ought to be informed of this circumstance. In fine, as soon as he had arrived in England, which was but a few weeks after us, I went to see him, and partly from regard to him, and partly from resentment against Keith, I delivered him up the letter itself. He thanked me in the most expressive manner, for the favour I did him, the information contained in it being of the utmost importance; and from that moment he conceived a friendship for me, which was very advantageous, and useful on a variety of occasions.

What is one to think of a governor like this, who acted such a pitiful part, and imposed so grossly upon a poor young man, destitute of experience?

It

It had actually become a *habit* with Sir William Keith. He wished to please all the world, and having but little to give, he was prodigal of his promises. Notwithstanding this he was a very sensible and accomplished man, an excellent scholar, and a good governor for the people over whom he presided, although he was not esteemed by his constituents the proprietors, whose instructions he often neglected.

Many of our best laws were not only enacted under his administration, but actually penned by himself.

C H A P. V.

The Author leads a dissipated Life in London—He lodges in the same House with Ralph—Makes Love to his Mistress—Becomes Author, and writes a Metaphysical Work in Answer to Wollaston—Is introduced to Dr. Meadeville, Author of the Fable of the Bees—Some Account of that Gentleman—Removes to another Printing-House—Drinks Water only, and is yet stronger than such of his Companions as drink Beer—Enacts several wholesome Laws among his fellow Workmen—Ingenious Dissertation on the folly of swallowing Strong Beer—Anecdotes of a Nun—His excellence in the Art of Summing—He is engaged as a Merchant's Clerk, and returns to Philadelphia.

RALPH and I were inseparable companions; we lodged together at the rate of three shillings and a half per week, this was all that we were then in a situation to afford. He discovered several of his relations who resided in London, but they were all exceedingly poor, and totally unable to assist him. He told me about this time, that it was his intention to remain in England, and that he was determined never more to return to Philadelphia. He was absolutely destitute of money, the little he had been able to procure, being scarce sufficient to pay for his passage.

I was still in possession of fifteen *pistoles*, and he applied to me from time to time, in order to assist him, until he should get some employment.

Imagining

Imagining that he possessed the necessary talents for becoming an actor, he had a prodigious inclination for a theatrical life, but Wilkes, to whom he addressed himself, desired him to give over every idea of that profession, it being, as he frankly told him, totally impossible for him to succeed in it. He then applied to Roberts, a bookseller in Paternoster-Row, to whom he proposed to write a weekly paper, after the manner of the *Spectator*, but the conditions not being agreeable, his proposition was rejected. He afterwards endeavoured to be employed as a copying-clerk for the law stationers in the neighbourhood of the Temple, but he did not find any place vacant.

As to me, I was immediately admitted into the employment of Mr. Palmer, at that time a famous printer in St. Bartholomew's-Close, where I remained upwards of a twelve-month.

I was exceedingly assiduous at my business, but I spent nearly every farthing I earned in company with Ralph. The play-houses and other places of public entertainment which we frequented together, having exhausted all my *pistoles*, we thenceforward were obliged to live from *hand to mouth*.

He appeared to have entirely forgotten his wife and child, and as for me, I had also nearly forgotten my engagements with Miss Read, to whom I never wrote but one letter, and that merely to inform her, that I should not return so soon as I had expected. This was another of the great errors of my life, which I should desire to correct, were I to begin it once more. In short, we led such a round of dissipation, that

that it became utterly impossible for me to pay my passage.

I was employed by Palmer, to compose the second edition of "Wollaston's Religion of Nature" Some of his reasoning not appearing to me to be well founded, I wrote a little metaphysical essay, in which I made some remarks upon these passages. It was entitled, "a Dissertation on Liberty and Necessity, "Pleasure and Pain" I inscribed it to my friend Ralph, and having put it to press, threw off several copies of it.

This circumstance occasioned Mr. Palmer to entertain a greater respect for me than before, and to look upon me as a young man of abilities, although he made me many serious reproaches on the principles maintained in my work, which, according to him, was heathenish and abominable. The impression of this tract was another error in my life.

During the time that I lodged in Little Britain, I formed an acquaintance with a bookseller of the name of Wilcox, whose shop adjoined the house in which I resided: He had an immense collection of books upon sale, circulating libraries were not then in fashion. It was resolved in consequence of a reasonable allowance agreed upon between us, the amount of which I do not at present recollect, that I should enjoy the liberty of reading all the books I chose, which were afterwards to be returned to him. I looked upon this bargain as very advantageous to me, and profited as much as possible by it

My

My pamphlet having fallen into the hands of a surgeon of the name of Lyons, author of a book entitled "The Infallability of Human Judgment," this circumstance occasioned an extraordinary intimacy between us. He testified a great deal of esteem for me, came often to see me, in order to converse with me upon these matters, and introduced me to Doctor Mandeville, author of the "Fable of the Bees," who was president, and indeed the life and soul of a club, held at a tavern in Cheapside.

He was a very facetious and amusing man. He presented me at Batson's coffee-house to Doctor Pemberton, who promised to introduce me to Sir Isaac Newton, an event which I was very eager to bring about : But he never kept his promise

I had brought some curiosities along with me from America, the principal of which was a purse composed of the filaments of the *Asbestos*, which was cleaned by means of fire. Sir Hans Sloane having heard some person mention this, came to see me, and invited me to his house in Bloomsbury Square, where after having shewn me all the rare productions of his collection, he persuaded me to deposit this among the rest, paying me, however, a very liberal price for it.

A young woman who was a milliner, and had a shop as I understood, close to the Royal Exchange, happened to lodge in our house. She was at once lively and sensible ; she had received a superior education ; her conversation was therefore very entertaining and agreeable.

Ralph

Ralph read comedies to her every evening, and this occasioned a great intimacy to take place between them. She removed to another lodging and he followed her. They lived sometime together, and he continued still destitute of any employment whatever. Having a child, her income did not prove sufficient for the maintenance of all three, he therefore took the resolution to leave London, and resolved to keep a school in the country. He thought himself well calculated to succeed in this scheme, as he wrote a very fine hand, and was well acquainted with arithmetic and book-keeping.

He, however, regarded this situation as infinitely below his abilities, and hoping for brighter prospects and happier days hereafter, during which he might be ashamed of having exercised such a degrading profession, he changed his name, and did me the honour to adopt mine.

He actually sent me a letter a short time afterwards, in order to inform me that he was established in a little day school in an obscure village, where if I recollect right, he taught ten or a dozen children to read and write at six-pence sterling a week each. He recommended Mrs. T—— to my care, and requested me to address my answer to Mr. Franklin, school master at N—— in Berkshire.

He continued to write frequently, and to convey to me large fragments of an Epic poem, which he was at that time composing, and upon which he demanded my remarks and my corrections. I accordingly transmitted them from time to time, but I constantly
endeavoured

endeavoured to persuade him to abandon this kind of pursuit.

Young happening much about this period to publish one of his satires; I copied, and transmitted that part of it to him in which the author points out the contempt into which the poets of the day had fallen, and demonstrates the folly of cultivating the Muses, with the hope of rising in the world by their means. Here follow the verses I allude to.

“Th abandon d manners of our writing train
 “May tempt mankind to think religion vain,
 “But in their fate, their habit, and their mien,
 “That Gods there are, is evidently seen
 “Heav’n stands absolv’d by vengeance on their pen,
 “And marks the murderers of fame from men.
 “Thro’ meagre jaws they draw their venal breath,
 “As ghastly as their brothers in Macbeth
 “Their feet thro’ faithless leather meets the dirt,
 “And oftner chang’d than principles than shirt
 “The transient vestments of these frugal men,
 “Hasten to paper for our mirth again
 “Too soon (O merry melancholy fate!)
 “They beg in rhyme, and warble thro’ a grate,
 “The man lampoon’d, forgets it at the sight;
 “The friend thro’ pity gives, the foe thro’ spight,
 “And tho’ full conscious of his injur’d purse,
 “Lintot relents, nor Curll can wish them worse.”

“An Author ’tis a venerable name!
 “How few deserve it and what numbers claim!
 “Unblest’d with sense, above their peers refin’d,
 “Who shall stand up, dictators to mankind?”

“Nay,

" Nay, who dare shine, if not in virtue's cause ?
 " That sole proprietor of just applause
 ' Ye restless men ! who pant for letter'd praise,
 " With whom would you consult to gain the bays ?
 " With those great authors whose fam'd works you read ?
 " 'Tis well, go, then, consult the laurell'd shade,
 " What answer will the laurell'd shade return ?
 " Hear it and tremble, he commands you burn
 " The noblest works, his envy'd genius writ,
 " That boasts of nought more excellent than wit
 " If this be true, as 'tis a truth most dread,
 " Wo to the page which has not that to plead !
 " Fontaine and Chaucer dying, with'd unwrote
 " The sprightliest efforts of their wanton thought .
 " Sidney and Waller, brightest sons of fame,
 " Condemn'd the charm of ages to the flame

" Thus ends your courted fame—does lucre then,
 " The sacred thirst of gold, betray your pen ?
 " In prose 'tis blameable, in verse 'tis worse,
 " Provokes the Muse, extorts Apollo's curse ;
 " His sacred influence never should be sold ,
 " 'Tis arrant simony to sing for gold ,
 " 'Tis immortality should fire your mind
 " Scorn a less paymaster than all mankind '

YOUNG, Vol III Epist II p 70.

But all my efforts were useless, and my labour entirely lost, for sheet upon sheet of the poem continued to arrive by every post.

In the mean time Mrs. T——— having lost all her friends, as well as her trade on his account, was often reduced to the utmost distress. On those occasions she had recourse to me, and I lent her
all

all the money in my power, in order to rescue her from her misfortunes.

I indeed began to conceive too great a regard for this young woman. Being at that time entirely destitute of any curb from religion, and taking advantage of the necessity she was under of applying to me, I endeavoured to take some familiarities with her, (another error in my life,) which she repelled with a proper degree of spirit and resentment. She even informed Ralph of my behaviour, and this adventure occasioned a quarrel between us.

Upon his return to London, he gave me to understand, that he looked upon all the obligations which he was under to me, to be entirely annihilated by my conduct; from this I concluded that I could never hope to be reimbursed either the money which I had lent him, or advanced her upon his account. I was the less afflicted at this circumstance, as he was at present utterly unable to pay me, I considered also, that although I had lost his friendship, I was eased at the same time of a very heavy burden.

I began from that moment to be more economical, and to save a little money in order to supply the wants of futurity.

The printing-house of Mr. Watts, near Lincoln's Inn Fields, being still more considerable than that in which I was engaged, it was probable that I might find it turn out more to my account, to be employed there. I accordingly presented myself and was instantly admitted, I remained there all the rest of the time I staid in London.

Upon my first entrance into this printing-house, I chose to work at the press, because I imagined that I stood in need of that corporal exercise which I had been accustomed to in America, where the workmen are proofmen and compositors by turns.

I in the mean time drank nothing but water, while all the other workmen, to the number of fifty, were extremely fond of porter. Yet I was able to carry as great a weight with one hand, as any of them could do with two. They confessed upon this, and a number of other occasions, that the *Acetate of Zimaticum*, as they were pleased to call me, was much stronger than them, although they drank strong beer.

A boy from a neighboring public house, was constantly employed during the whole day, in bringing porter to the workmen. My companion at the press drank a pint every morning before breakfast, a pint at breakfast with his bread and cheese, another between breakfast and dinner, one at dinner, and two after dinner about six o'clock in the afternoon, and one more after he had finished his day's work.

I looked upon this to be a most detestable custom; but it was absolutely necessary, according to him, to drink strong beer, in order to enable him to work.

I endeavored to convince him that the additional corporal strength afforded by the beer, could only be imputed to the quantity of grain, or barley dissolved in the water, out of which the beer was composed: that there was much more in a half-penny worth of bread than in a pint of beer, and that
if

if he ate that quantity of bread with a pint of water, he would draw more nourishment, and, consequently, more strength from it than from a pint of beer. This mode of reasoning did not prevent him however from continuing to drink, and to pay every Saturday night to the amount of four or five shillings on account of this villainous liquor, an expence from which I was entirely exempted. It is in this manner that these poor devils remain always in misery.

After the lapse of a few weeks, Watts having occasion for a compositor, I quitted the press business. The other compositors on this desired me to pay my *footing* once more, but I looked upon such a demand as an imposition, having paid it already to the pressmen. The master was entirely of my way of thinking, and ordered me not to comply with so unreasonable a request. I remained accordingly for two or three weeks without being admitted *a member of the society*. I was in consequence looked upon as an excommunicated person, and if I happened to be absent at any time, a few minutes from my business, I experienced the effects of their malice in a thousand trifles.

On my return I was sure to find my letter mixed together and confused, my pages transposed, my matter out of order, &c. &c. and all was attributed to the *Spirit of the Chapel**, who according to

* This is the name given by the workmen to the Printing House.

them always vexed those who were not regularly admitted.

I was at length obliged notwithstanding my master's protection, to submit myself so far as to pay their demand, being fully convinced, that it is a great folly not to be on good terms with those among whom one is obliged to live constantly.

After this, I was well received by all of them, and I soon acquired a considerable influence over their minds. I proposed some alterations in the laws of the *Chapel*, and I had interest enough to get them passed in spite of all opposition.

My example had such an effect upon them that many of them renounced their breakfast of beer, and bread and cheese, and procured from a neighbouring house in the same manner as myself, a large porringer of water gruel with a lump of butter in the middle of it, and some chippings of bread and a little pepper strewed on the top. This was a much better breakfast, and did not cost more than the price of a pint of beer, that is to say, three half-pence, while on the other hand it kept the head infinitely more clear, and enabled them to work better.

Those who continued to gorge themselves with beer all day long, by neglecting to pay their *score* often lost all their credit at the ale-house. On such occasions they had always recourse to me, in order that I might pass my word for them, "their light being out!" as they termed it. I placed myself at the pay table every Saturday evening, in order to be reimbursed

reimbursed the small sums that I had stood surety for during the preceding week.

This circumstance, added to my reputation of possessing a turn for satire, contributed to support my importance in the chapel. Besides this, I recommended myself to my master by my application and assiduity, for I never kept St. Monday. My extraordinary quickness at composition, was always sure to procure me such works as were of a pressing nature, which are generally the most lucrative, I therefore was enabled to live comfortably, and to pass my time very agreeably.

My apartment in Little Britain being too far distant from the printing-office, I removed to another in Duke Street Lincoln's Inn Fields, exactly opposite the Roman Catholic chapel; it was at the back of an Italian warehouse. A widow kept the house; her family consisted of a daughter, a female servant, and a shopman, who lodged in an adjoining street.

After having sent an order to make some enquiries relating to me, at the place in which I lived before, she consented to let me an apartment at the same price (three shillings and six-pence, a week) contenting herself with so little, she said, on account of the safety that would accrue to single women, from the circumstance of having a man to sleep in the same house with them.

She herself was a woman of a certain age, and the daughter of a clergyman; she had been educated in the Protestant Religion, but her husband, whose memory she greatly revered, had converted her to the

Catholic church. She had lived much among people of distinction, and had thousands of anecdotes by heart, some of which extended as far back as the reign of Charles II.

She had lost the use of her legs by means of the gout, and was often confined to her chamber, so that she was frequently desirous of having company to visit her. Her conversation was so exceedingly amusing to me, that I was eager to spend the evening with her, as often as she requested me. Our supper consisted of nothing more than half an anchovy a piece, laid upon a slice of bread, with a little butter, and half a pint of ale between us. This appears to be a scanty meal, but the regale consisted entirely in her conversation.

The care I took to return at an early hour, and the little trouble that I occasioned to the family, made her direct the idea of a separation, so that when I mentioned a lodging that had been pointed out to me, much nearer the place where I worked, and which was to be let at two shillings a week, an offer which my desire of saving money induced me to accept of, she requested me to give up every idea of a change, as she herself would take off two shillings from the sum I then paid her. Thus my lodgings cost me no more than eighteen-pence per week, during the rest of the time I remained in London.

A maiden lady of 70 years of age lived in the most obscure and retired manner in a garret in the same house. The following particulars concerning her, were communicated to me, by my landlady :

She

She was a Roman Catholic, who in her early youth had been sent to the continent, where she entered into a convent with the intention of becoming a nun. but the climate disagreeing with her, she returned to England, and as there was not a nunnery in that country, she had made a vow to lead a monastic life, as far, at least, as circumstances would permit her. In consequence of this, she had disposed of most of her property, in order to employ the produce of it in works of charity, and had only received £21 per annum to herself, part of which small sum she continued to distribute among the poor. To enable her to do this, she lived entirely upon water gruel, and never lighted a fire but on purpose to make it.

She had lodged for a great number of years in the same garret, where she was permitted to remain gratis, by the Catholic families who had taken this house in succession, and who looked upon her residence with them as a blessing from Heaven. A Priest came daily in order to confess her.

“I have asked her often, (said my hostess,) considering the manner in which she lived, how it was possible for her to find so much occupation for a Confessor?” “O replied she, it is impossible to avoid vain thoughts!”

I once received permission to pay her a visit. she appeared gay, polite, and very agreeable in conversation. Her bed-chamber was neat, but she had not any other moveables in it besides a mattress, a table with a crucifix and a book upon it, a chair which

she presented me to sit upon, and a picture of St. Veronica-over the chimney-piece, in which that holy female displayed a handkerchief, with the face of Jesus Christ miraculously imprinted upon it. The pious Catholic explained this circumstance to me, with a very serious countenance

Her face was pale, but she never had been sick, and I may give this as another example to prove how little money is necessary, in order to support both life and health

I got acquainted at the printing office with a young man of the name of Wygate, whose parents were opulent, and who, in consequence, had been better educated than the generality of printers. He was a very good Latin scholar, spoke French pretty well, and was very fond of reading. I taught him and several of his friends to swim, for this purpose I carried them two or three times to the river Thames, and after a little practice they acquired a certain degree of facility and even perfection in this exercise. We one day made a party in order to go to Chelsea, to see the College and the curiosities at Don Saltero's, with some gentlemen in the neighbourhood of London, to whom they introduced me. On our return, at the request of the company whose curiosity had been excited by Wygate, I undressed myself, jumped into the river, and swam nearly from Chelsea to Black-Friars, making a variety of evolutions and performing several feats of activity, as well on the top of the water, as below it.

This

This afforded a great deal of pleasure, satisfaction, and even astonishment, to those to whom such a spectacle was entirely new. I had been greatly addicted to, and had loved this delightful exercise from my early infancy. I was acquainted with, and practised all the motions and positions recommended by Thevenot, and had even invented some new ones myself, in which I endeavoured to unite grace with utility. I took great care to do my utmost to excel upon this occasion, and I was really flattered with the admiration I had excited by my skill and activity.

Wygate who was exceedingly desirous of excelling in this art, attached himself so much the more to me, as there was a great conformity between our studies, and our habits of life. In short he proposed to me to make the tour of Europe together, and to defray the expences of our journey, by working in our profession, in all the great cities which we might pass through.

I was on the point of consenting to this scheme. I even communicated it to my friend Mr. Denham, with whom I was always happy to pass a leisure hour. He dissuaded me from this project, and advised me to think seriously of returning to Philadelphia, where he himself was determined shortly to repair. I shall here recount a circumstance, which will serve to give some idea of the character of this worthy man.

He had been formerly a merchant in Bristol. Having failed in business there, he made a composition with his creditors, and set out for America, where by
means

means of an assiduous application to trade, he acquired a considerable fortune in a few years. On his return to England in the same vessel with myself, as I have mentioned before, he invited all his former creditors to a feast. When they were assembled, he returned them many thanks for the kind manner in which they had treated him, and while they expected nothing more than a good dinner, each of the guests on changing his plate, found an order on a banker, for the payment of the remainder of the debt, besides interest at 5 *per cent.*

He informed me, that he intended to return to America, and to carry out with him a large quantity of merchandize, with which he resolved to open a * store, and he moreover offered to take me out with him as a clerk in order to superintend his books, to copy his letters, &c. &c. &c. He added that as soon as I should become familiar with commercial matters, he would send me as a supercargo, with sugar, pork, &c. &c. to the West Indies, and procure me a variety of lucrative commissions, in short, he observed, that with conduct and ability, I could not fail to establish myself advantageously.

I was charmed with these propositions. London began to be hateful to me, the agreeable moments I had spent in Pennsylvania, were recalled to my memory, and I desired once more to enjoy similar scenes.

I accordingly engaged with Mr Denham at £ 50 *per annum*, Pennsylvania money. This was indeed a

* This is the usual appellation both in America and the West Indies, for a warehouse.

less sum than what I might have gained as a Compositor, but I had an infinitely more agreeable career opened to my ambition.

I now bid farewell, as I thought for the last time, to the printing-house, and delivered myself entirely up to the study of my new profession, passing my whole time, either in visiting the merchants with Mr. Denham in order to purchase the different articles he stood in need of, or running among the workmen, to hasten them in their operations, &c. &c. When all was put on board, I had then a few days of leisure for myself.

During this short interval, I happened one morning to be sent for, by a person of distinction, with whose name only, I was acquainted. It was Sir William Wyndham, I repaired to him accordingly. He had heard a great deal, by what means I know not, about my swimming from Chelsea to Black-frairs, and also that I had taught this art, in a few hours, to Wygate and several of his companions. His two sons, he said, were about to proceed upon their travels, he was desirous that they should first learn to swim, and he offered me a very liberal gratification, if I would undertake to teach them.

As they were not as yet arrived in town, and my stay in the capital was wholly uncertain, I was of course unable to accept his proposition. I was, however, induced from this incident to believe, if I had chosen to have remained in England and opened a school for *Natation*, that I should in all human probability have gained a great deal of money. I was

so struck with the idea at the moment, that, if the same proposition had been suggested a little sooner, I should never have thought of returning to America.

You and I, several years afterwards, had a matter of greater consequence to confer upon, with one of the sons of this very Sir William Wyndham, who was created Earl of Egremont.—But let us not anticipate events.

I had passed in this manner eighteen months in London, working with great industry at my trade, and incurring no other expence than that arising from seeing a few plays, and purchasing a small collection of books.

My friend Ralph had, however, kept me in poverty; he owed me no less than £.27 which appeared to me to be so much money lost, this was a great sum deducted from my little savings. Notwithstanding this, I loved him greatly, because he possessed a number of very amiable qualities.

But although I had not improved my fortune, I had augmented my mass of knowledge by reading many excellent books, and by conversing with men of letters, and several of those who excelled in the Arts and Sciences, with whom I found means to form an acquaintance, and even to become intimate.

We set sail from Gravesend, on the . . . of July, 1726. I refer you for the incidents of our voyage to my journal, where you will find every thing minutely detailed.

We landed at Philadelphia on the . . . of October following.

CHAP.

C H A P VI.

Our Author meets Governor Sir William Keith, on his return to Philadelphia—He learns that Miss Read is married—Sickness and Death of Mr. Denham—He changes his Situation once more, and becomes a Printer again—Some Account of an Oxford Scholar—Dispute with Kermer—Reconciliation—Paper Money—He removes to Burlington—History of Isaac Decon, Inspection General of New Jersey—Project of an Establishment—A Dissertation on Morality and Religion—He begins to doubt his Metaphysical Principles—Resolves to act with Honesty in all his Dealings.

ON my return, Sir William Keith was no longer governor of Pennsylvania, having been dispossessed of his employment, and replaced by Major Gordon. I met him walking in the streets as a simple citizen, he appeared a little ashamed at seeing me, but he passed without taking any notice of me, or even speaking a single word.

I myself should have been equally ashamed at seeing Miss Read, if her family, despairing with good reason of my return, after receiving the letter I had sent her, had not persuaded her to give up every idea of me, and prevailed upon her to espouse a potter of the name of Rogers, during my absence. He, however, did not make her a good husband, and she separated from him soon after, refusing to cohabit with him, and even to pass by his name, because it was rumoured that he had another wife still living. His
still

skill in his trade had induced Miss Read's parents to consent to this match, but he was an equally bad husband and excellent workman. Having contracted several debts, he ran away, in 1727 or 1728, to the West Indies, where he died.

During my absence, Keimer had hired a more considerable house than the one which he occupied before, and he had opened a shop well furnished with paper and other goods of a similar kind. He had also procured an abundance of new types, and a number of workmen, among whom there was not, however, a single good one. He seemed to be in a thriving way, and to have great employment.

Mr. Denham hired a warehouse in Water-Street, where we displayed our merchandize. I was assiduous in business; I studied book-keeping, and in a short time I became exceedingly expert at it. We lodged and boarded together, he was sincerely attached to me, and acted in every thing exactly the same as if he had been my father. On my side, I loved and respected him, my situation indeed was extremely pleasant, but this happiness was of very short duration.

About the beginning of February, 1727, the epoch at which I entered into the 22nd year of my age, we both fell sick. I was attacked by a pleurisy, which nearly carried me off, I suffered a great deal, and gave myself over for lost. It was actually a sort of disappointment to me, when I found myself convalescent, and I regretted that I should sooner or later, have

have the same disagreeable career to run through hereafter.

I do not at present recollect what was the nature of the malady with which Mr. Denham was seized; but it was long in its continuance, and he at length sunk beneath its pressure. He left me a small legacy in his will, as a testimony of his affection, and thus I was once more delivered up to my own management, in the vast ocean of the universe, for the store being confided to the care of the testamentary legatee, I immediately received my dismissal.

My brother-in-law, Captain Holmes, who happened at this time to be in Philadelphia, advised me to return to my first profession, and Keimer offered me a very large salary, provided I would undertake the management of his printing-house, in order to enable him to give up all his own time and attention to the shop.

His wife, and her relations in London, had given me but a very indifferent idea of this man, and I did not care to have any thing to do with a person of his character. I accordingly sought for employment among the merchants, but not finding any immediate vacancy, I allowed myself to be prevailed upon by Keimer, to reside with him.

I found the following workmen in his printing-house

Hugh Meredith, a Pennsylvanian about 35 years of age, he had been brought up as a farmer, he was honest, sensible, experienced, and was besides fond of books.

Stephen

Stephen Potts was a young man who possessed excellent natural qualifications, far superior indeed to what is commonly met with among people in his situation, and along with this he had much wit and great gaiety of disposition, but he was rather lazy.

Keimer had hired these two by the week, at very moderate wages, which were to be augmented at the rate of one shilling every three months, according to their progress in their business. This future augmentation was the bait which he made use of in order to gain them. Meredith was to be employed at press-work, and Potts in book binding, both of which branches their honest master undertook to teach them, although he himself was entirely ignorant of either of them.

The third was John Savage, he had not been educated to any trade whatever; Keimer had purchased his service for four years from the captain of a vessel, who had brought him over. He was destined to become a press-man.

George Webb was an Oxford scholar, whose service he had also purchased for four years; he was intended to be a compositor. I shall speak of him hereafter.

The last was David Harry, a country lad, whom he had taken as an apprentice.

I soon perceived that Keimer's intention in engaging me at such high wages, and so far beyond what he was accustomed to give, was in order that I might educate and form as it were, all those new and unexpensive workmen, who were most of them bound to
him

him by indentures, and, that as soon as they should be sufficiently instructed in their respective occupations, he would instantly dismiss me.

I immediately put his printing-office, which was in the utmost confusion, in order, and I succeeded by degrees, in making his assistants attend to their business, and proceed much better than they had done before.

It was rather an extraordinary circumstance to behold an Oxford scholar in the situation of an *indented servant*. He was not above eighteen years of age, and the following are the particulars of his own history, as detailed to me by himself.

He was born in Gloucester, was educated at a grammar-school in that city, and had distinguished himself above the other scholars, by the superior manner in which he acted his part, when they used to perform dramatic entertainments. He was member of a literary club in that part of the country, and had published some pieces of his own composition both in verse and prose, in the Gloucester news-paper.

He soon after was sent to Oxford, where he remained for about a year, but he was discontented with a college life, and was desirous, above all things to see London, and become a comedian there. At length happening to receive fifteen guineas as the payment of his quarter's board and expences, instead of liquidating his debts, he left the university on foot, concealed his gown in a bush, and proceeded straight to ward to London.

On his arrival there, having no friend to superintend and direct his conduct, he fell into bad company, spent all his money, and not being able to get an engagement in any of the theatres, he became reduced to the utmost misery, pawned his clothes, and was actually in want of bread. As he happened one day to walk along the streets half famished with hunger, and not caring what was to become of him, an advertisement was put into his hand, distributed by one of those people called *Kidnappers*, in which immediate relief, and a sum of money by way of bounty, was offered to all those who should engage to serve in America.

He instantly repaired to the place which was pointed out in the hand-bill, entered into an engagement, was received on board a vessel, and passed over to America, without ever writing a single line to inform his relations of what had become of him.

His vivacity and natural endowments rendered him a good companion, but he was of an indolent disposition, without any foresight, and, to the last degree, imprudent.

John the Irishman, was not long in running away.

I began to live in a very agreeable manner with the others. They all respected me so much the more, as they found Keimer incapable of instructing them, while they learned something new from me daily. We never worked on a Saturday, because it was Keimer's *Sabbath*; and thus I had two days every week, which I devoted to reading.

I also

I also increased the number of my acquaintance, at least among well-informed people, as much as possible. Keimer himself treated me apparently with much civility and consideration, and nothing, at that period, gave me any uneasiness except my debt to Vernon, which I was still incapable of paying, not having as yet been able to accumulate so large a sum out of my little savings; but he was kind enough not to demand the reimbursement of it.

Our printing-house was often in want of different sorts of *letter*, and there were no letter-founders in America. I, however, was able, with some difficulty, to construct a mould; I made use of the letters which we had already, as *punches*; I cast the types in lead, by means of a clay matrix; and I thus made shift to supply the printing-house with whatever was wanting. True it is, that the letter was not good, but it was tolerable.

I also, upon occasion, engraved a variety of ornaments; I made ink, I now and then put the shop in proper order; in short, I became, as it were, Keimer's *factotum*.

But, however useful I might be, I soon perceived that my services became daily of less importance, and that this happened exactly in proportion as the other workmen began to be more expert at their business; in short, on paying my second quarter's wages, he informed me, that he thought them too high, and that in his opinion, I ought to make some abatement. He also became less civil, and daily took upon him more of the tone, and the authority of a master. He

often pretended to have occasion to find fault with me, he became more difficult to please, and even seemed ready to come to an open rupture with me.

I continued, notwithstanding, to support his ill conduct with patience, thinking that the embarrassment of his affairs, was in part the occasion of his bad temper. At length a very slight incident dissolved our connection. Happening one day to hear a great noise in the neighbourhood of our house, I put my head out of the window in order to see what had occasioned it. Komer, who was in the street, looked up, and having observed me, told me in a loud and choleric tone of voice, to look to my business, he also added some reproachful expressions, which piqued me the more, because they were delivered in public, all the neighbours, who, like myself, were attracted to the window, having overheard the conversation, had been witnesses of the manner in which I was treated.

Not content with this, he came up stairs into the printing-office, and continued to abuse me. Both of us waxed warm, and he gave me warning to quit his service at the approaching quarter, according to previous stipulation, testifying at the same time great uneasiness at being obliged to give me so long a term.

In reply to this, I told him, that his regret was superfluous, because I was ready to leave him at that very moment. In short, I snatched up my hat, and rushed out of the house, desiring Meredith, whom I saw below, to take some of my effects which I had left behind me, and carry them at his leisure to my lodgings.

Meredith

Meredith accordingly called upon me that very evening, and we spoke a great deal concerning what I had endured

He had conceived a great veneration for me, and was extremely sorry that I should leave the office while he resided there. He also dissuaded me from returning to my native province; for I actually began to form such an idea. He reminded me that Keimer owed a sum equal at least to the value of the property he was in possession of, that his creditors began to be clamorous, that he carried on trade in a most foolish manner, often selling things without any profit, in order to procure ready money, and giving credit to any person from mere habit, and even without keeping an exact account of it. In consequence of this he argued, that in the end he must fail in business, which would afford an opening, from which I might find means to profit greatly.

To this I objected my want of capital, but he informed me in reply, that his father had conceived the highest opinion of me, and that in consequence of a conversation they had lately together, he was assured he would advance a sum of money to set us up in business, if I would but admit him into partnership with me.

“ The time I am bound to Keimer,” says he, will
“ be out next spring. By that period we may have
“ received our press and our types from London.
“ I know that I am not a good workman, but if you
“ will agree to my proposition, your knowledge in
“ business will be in some measure counterbalanced

“ by the capital advanced by me, and we shall divide
“ the profits equally between us ”

His proposal was so very reasonable, that we instantly shook hands upon it. His father too, who happened to be in town at that very time, approved of our scheme. He knew that I had a great influence over the mind of his son, for I had prevailed upon him, for some months past, to abstain from drinking brandy, and he hoped that if we were more intimately connected together, I should be able to make him give over this unhappy custom altogether.

I gave his father a catalogue of the tools it would be necessary for us to receive from London. He carried it immediately to a merchant's, and gave him an order for procuring them. We had agreed together to keep this matter a secret, until their arrival, and I was in the mean time, to endeavour to procure, if possible, some employment in another printing-office, but there was no place vacant, and so I remained idle.

At the end of a few days, however, Keimer having the expectation of being employed to print the paper money for the State of New Jersey, a job which required engravings, and different characters, which I alone could furnish, and fearing lest Bradford should engage me, and consequently procure this business, sent me a very civil message. He said that old friends ought not to remain enemies, on account of a few hasty words, spoken in a moment of passion, and that he was exceedingly desirous that I should return to him once more. Meredith persuaded me to accept of
his

his invitation, and as an additional reason, observed, that it would be particularly advantageous to him, as he would thus have a better opportunity of improving himself in his profession, by means of my daily instructions.

I accordingly returned, and we lived in greater harmony together than before our late separation.

Keimer was lucky enough to be employed by the province of New Jersey. In order to facilitate our operations, I constructed a press for copper-plate printing: This was the first that had ever been seen in America. I engraved a variety of *vignettes* and ornaments for the notes; Keimer and I then repaired to Burlington, where I executed the whole to the satisfaction of every body, and he received a sum of money on this occasion, which helped him to *keep his head above water*, much longer than he would otherwise have been able to do.

At Burlington I got acquainted with the principal persons of the province. Several of them had been nominated by the assembly, in order to superintend the press, and take care that there were no more *notes* printed than the number ordained by law. In consequence of this, they were by turns, constantly with us, and whoever came according to rotation, commonly brought with him one or two friends to keep him company.

My mind was much more cultivated by reading than Keimer's; it was probably on this account that they were better pleased with my conversation than his. They invited me to their houses, introduced me

to their friends, and treated me with the utmost attention and politeness, while Keimer, although the master, perceived himself a little neglected.

He was, in truth, a strange animal, entirely ignorant of the common customs of life, ever ready to oppose himself with bluntness to received opinions, enthusiastical in regard to some points of religion, disgusting in his person; and, in fine, in addition to all this, a little bit of a rogue.

We remained near three months at Burlington, and at the end of that period, I could reckon Judge Allen, Samuel Butill, secretary of the province, Isaac Pearson, Joseph Cooper, several gentlemen of the name of Smith, all members of the assembly, and Isaac Decon, the inspector-general, among the number of my friends.

This last was an able and intelligent man, who told me, that in his early youth, he began the world by digging clay for the brick-makers, he added, that he was rather old when he learned to write, that he was at first employed in carrying the chain for the surveyors, who taught him their trade, and that his industry had at length procured him a genteel fortune.

"I foresee," said he to me one day, "that you will soon supplant this man (speaking of Keimer) in his profession, and that you will make your fortune by it hereafter in Philadelphia." He had not, at that time, the least possible knowledge of my intention of setting up, either there, or elsewhere.

His

His friends were of great service to me in the end, as I also was, when ever opportunity served, to some them, and they have all since continued to testify great regard towards me.

Before I relate the circumstances that attended my first entrance into business, it may, perhaps be proper to inform you, what was, at that time, the state of my mind, relative to the principles of morality, that so you may be enabled to judge, how far they have influenced the posterior events of my life.

My parents at an early age, had given me religious impressions, and I received, in my infancy, a pious education. I was brought up in the principles of the Presbyterian religion, but scarce had I attained the age of fifteen, when, after having doubted of different points by turns, accordingly as I found them attacked in the different books that I perused, I began actually to doubt of revelation itself.

Some tracts against Deism happened about this time to fall into my hands, they contained, as I was told in the preface, the substance of several sermons which had been preached in Boyle's laboratory. It somehow happened, that they operated a quite contrary effect, to that which had been proposed by the writer; for the arguments of the Deists which had been cited in order to be refuted, appeared to me to be much stronger than the refutation itself. In short, I became a complete Deist.

My mode of reasoning upon this subject, also perverted several other young men, particularly Collins and Ralph, but when I began afterwards to recollect,
that

that they had both of them done me a great deal of harm, without the least remorse, when I considered the proceedings of governor Keith, another *free thinker*, and my own conduct towards Vernon and Miss Read, which, at times gave me great uneasiness, I suspected that this doctrine, although it might be true, was not very useful. I also began to have a worse opinion than before of the pamphlet I had published in London, which had the following quotation from Dryden, by way of motto.

‘ Whatever is is right,
 “ No punblind man sees but a part of the chain;
 {“ The nearest link,)
 “ His eyes not carrying to the equal beam
 “ That posess all above

The conclusion I drew from this was, that in consequence of the goodness, the wisdom, and infinite power of the Deity, nothing could be wrong in this world, and that neither vice nor virtue existed in reality, and were, in short, nothing more than vain distinctions. I no longer looked upon this doctrine to be so irreproachable, as I had at first thought it, and I began to suspect that some imperceptible error had insinuated itself into my argument, which affected every thing that followed, as is commonly the case in metaphysical reasonings.

I at length remained fully convinced, that truth, sincerity, and integrity, in the dealings of man with man, were of the utmost importance to the happiness of mankind, and from that moment I formed the resolution,

solution, and wrote it down in my journal, to practice them during the remainder of my life.

Revelation, *as such*, had not in truth, any influence upon my mind; but I was of opinion that although certain actions could not be bad, *because it had prohibited them*, nor good, *because it had commanded them*, that it was nevertheless probable, that these actions were prohibited, because *they were bad for us*, and commanded, *because they were advantageous in their own nature*, all circumstances and things taken into consideration. And this persuasion, aided by the succour of Divine Providence, or some tutelary angel, and perhaps by circumstances and accidental situations, which were favourable in themselves, preserved me from all immorality, or at least from *gross and voluntary* injustice, which my want of religion tended to render me guilty of, during this dangerous period of youth, and amidst the difficult situations which I sometimes found myself exposed to among strangers, and at a distance from the eye and the counsels of my father.

I have thought fit to say *voluntary*, because the faults that I had hitherto committed, were in some respects *forced*, either by the inexperience of my youth or by the dishonesty of others.

I had consequently the principles, and I possessed the character of solid probity, before my entrance into the world on my own foundation. I was well aware of this advantage, and I was resolved to preserve it.

C H A P. VII

*Our Author sets up in Business—Some Account of the Cynic
 Mule—Establishment of a Political and Philosophical Club
 —He resolves to publish a News-paper—His Scheme is
 betrayed by a quondam Friend—He pays Visnon the Sum
 of Money so long due—Experiences new Embarrassments
 —Generosity of two of his Friends—Dissolution of his
 Partnership with Meredith—Some Observations relative
 to the Utility of Paper-Money—He opens a Stationer's Shop
 —His extraordinary Prudence, Economy, and Affiduity—
 He is at length united to Miss Read—He plans a Public
 Library*

WE had not returned but a few weeks to Philadelphia, when our types, presses, &c &c arrived from London. I instantly settled my accounts with Keimer, and left him with his own consent, before he had any knowledge of my design.

We hired an empty house near the Market-Place; in order to make the rent less inconvenient for us (it was then let for £.24 sterling per annum, and I have since known it to be let for £.70) we received Thomas Godfrey, a glazier, and his family, as lodgers, who supported a considerable portion of the expence, and permitted us to board with them at a stipulated sum.

Scarce had we got our types in order, and set up our press, when George House, an acquaintance of mine, brought us a countryman, whom he had picked

up

up in the streets wandering about in search of a printer. Our money was at this time nearly exhausted, on account of the variety of little sums we had been under the necessity of expending, and the countryman's five shillings, which were the first profits of our partnership, came so *a propos*, that I enjoyed more pleasure from the receipt of it, than from any sum I have ever gained since. The gratitude which I felt in my heart, for the friendly conduct of George House upon this occasion, rendered me infinitely more ready than I should otherwise have been, to favour and encourage young men, in their first outset in life.

In every country, there are a number of morose and cynical people, who are continually prognosticating the ruin of their neighbours. There was a person of this description, residing at that very time at Philadelphia. He was a man of a certain age, he possessed a considerable fortune, had an appearance of wisdom, and a very grave manner of speaking; his name was Samuel Mickle.

This man, whom I was entirely unacquainted with, stopped one day at my door, and asked me if I was the young man who had lately set up a new printing house, on my answering in the affirmative, he said that he was very sorry for me, because it was an hazardous enterprize, the expence of which was entirely thrown away, as Philadelphia was then actually in a state of decay, all the inhabitants having either shut up shop, or being on the point of doing so, he added, that he was certain, from his own knowledge, that
every

every thing that might induce foolish people to think otherwise, such as new buildings, and the increased price paid for lodgings, were deceitful signs, which, in truth, only contributed to hasten our ruin, and he gave me such a detailed account, both of the existing misfortunes, and of such as were on the eve of taking place, that he left me almost entirely discouraged.

If I had actually known this man before my entrance into business, I should, beyond all doubt, never have attempted it

He himself continued to live in this *ruined place*, and to declaim in the same manner, refusing, for many years to purchase a house, because every thing was falling into *decay*; at length, however, I had the satisfaction to see him pay five times as much for one as if he had bought it, when he first commenced his lamentations.

I ought to have observed, that in the course of the preceding autumn, I had collected a number of the best informed men of my acquaintance, in order to form a club, which we called the *Junto*, the intention of which institution was to improve our minds.

We met constantly every Friday evening. The laws which I myself drew up, obliged every member in his turn, to propose one or more questions on some point of morality, politics, or natural philosophy, in order to be discussed by the company present, and also to read once every three months, an essay of his own composition, on any subject that struck his fancy.

Our

Our debates were to be submitted to the regulation of a president, and were never to be excited but by the sincere desire of discovering the truth, without which the pleasure of disputation, or the vanity arising from victory, was to pass for nothing in our discussions. In short, in order to prevent bickerings and quarrels, all those expressions which might evince an obstinate, or head-strong opinion, and all direct contradictions, were prohibited under the penalty of little pecuniary fines.

The first members of our club were :

Joseph Brientnall, who was employed as a copying-clerk among the lawyers. He was a middle aged man, of a good natural disposition, greatly attached to his friends, very fond of poetry, reading all that he could meet with, and writing verses passably well; very ingenious, and exceedingly agreeable in conversation.

Thomas Godfrey, an able mathematician, who had studied this science without the assistance of a master, and who was afterwards the inventor of what is called Hadley's Quadrant, but he knew very little out of his own sphere, and was not supportable in company, always requiring, like most of the great mathematicians I have met with, an uncommon precision in every thing that was stated to them, and denying or distinguishing perpetually in regard to trifles; the true means of troubling and disturbing all conversation.

He soon quitted us.

Nicholas

Nicholas Scull, a surveyor, who soon after became surveyor general. He was fond of books and made verses.

William Parsons, brought up to the business of a shoe-maker, but, who being fond of reading, had acquired a profound knowledge of the mathematicks. He studied this science at first with an eye towards astrology, at which he himself was afterwards the first to laugh. He also became surveyor-general.

William Maugridge, a carpenter, and a most excellent mechanic. In addition to this, he was a man, at once solid and sensible.

Hugh Meredith, Stephen Potts, and George Webb, of whom I have before made mention.

Robert Grace, a young man of fortune, generous, lively, and witty, he was fond of satire, but he loved his friend still more than an epigram.

And last of all, William Coleman, at that time clerk to a merchant, and much about my own age. He had the coolest and clearest head, the best heart, and was the most exact moralist, that I almost ever happened to meet with. He afterwards became one of our most respectable merchants, and also one of the provincial judges. Our friendship existed without any interruption, for more than forty years, to the very day of his death, the club lasted nearly as long.

It was actually the best school in the province for philosophy and politics, for our questions, which were given out a whole week previous to their being discussed, put us under the necessity of making diligent

gent inquiries concerning the different objects proposed to be canvassed, in order to enable us to speak more pertinently upon the subjects under debate.

We thus also acquired the habit of a more agreeable kind of conversation than we had been before accustomed to, every question being debated according to the express laws of the society, and in such a manner as to prevent all disgust.

It is to this circumstance that we may attribute the duration of our club, of which I shall often have occasion to speak hereafter.

I shall now only mention it as one of the means on which I reckoned for the increase of our business, each of the members endeavouring, as much as possible, to get us employment. Bientnall, in particular, prevailed upon the Quakers to employ us, to print part of their history, the remainder was to be completed under the inspection of Kermer. It was impossible to take much pains with the work, as we had contracted to finish it at a very low price. It was a folio volume printed on *pro patria* paper, with a *Cæcio* character, the notes, which were exceedingly long, were in a smaller type. I composed half a sheet per day of it, and Meredith immediately put it to press. It was often eleven o'clock at night, and sometimes later, before I had finished my distribution for next day's work, the little trifles which we did from time to time, for our friends, kept us behind-hand, but I was resolutely determined to finish my task. Having one night imposed my *form*, and, as I thought, finished my labour, an accident occurred which

intirely displaced my two folio pages of *Cicero*; on this I instantly distributed them again, and recomposed the whole, previous to my retiring to rest.

This vigilance and industry, which our neighbours did not fail to perceive, began to acquire us both credit and reputation. I learned, among other things, that the merchants' club, which assembled every night, happening accidentally to talk about the new printing-house, it was the general opinion that it would not succeed, there being two printers (Keimer and Bradford) already established in the town. But Doctor Baird, whom you and I had occasion to see a great number of years after, in the place of his nativity, at St. Andrew's in Scotland, was of a contrary opinion.

"The industry of that Franklin (said he) is infinitely beyond any thing of the kind I ever knew in my life before. I see him still at work every night when I go home from the club, and he is again up and at business, before his neighbours are out of their beds." *Ames 12 2*

This circumstance made a great impression upon the rest of the assembly, and in a short time afterwards one of the members came and offered to furnish us with articles in the paper line, but we were determined not as yet to embarrass ourselves by opening a shop.

It is not in order to offer up incense to myself, that I here enter so fully into details relative to my industry, it is done merely with the idea that such of my descendants as read these Memoirs, may appreciate

ciate the advantage of this virtue, by perceiving, in the recital of my life, the happy effects which it produced in my favour.

George Webb, having found a friend who lent him money to re-purchase his indentures from Keimer, came one day in order to offer himself to us as a workman. We could not immediately give him employment, but I foolishly told him, by way of secret, that we intended speedily to publish a newspaper, and that we should then take him into our service. My hopes of success, which I freely communicated to him, were founded on the consideration, that the only paper which we had at that time in Philadelphia, and which was printed by Bradford, was a paltry publication, which although miserably conducted, and destitute of amusement, yet produced him a considerable profit.

Webb betrayed my confidence, and instantly communicated my project to Keimer, who, in order to anticipate me, published the *prospectus* of a paper, which he himself intended to print, and upon which Webb was to be employed.

I was provoked partly at my own indiscretion, and partly at the unfair advantage which had been taken of it. by way of opposition therefore, being as yet unable to begin our intended paper, I wrote several diverting little essays, for Bradford's journal, under the name of the "Busy Body," which Brentall continued for several months. I thus fixed the attention of the public upon it, and Keimer's *prospectus*, which we turned into ridicule, was despised.

Notwithstanding this, he actually published his paper, and after continuing it nine months, having at that time no more than ninety subscribers, he offered to sell it to me for a mere trifle. I was then at full liberty to conduct it, I therefore purchased the copy-right, and began to print it immediately upon my own account. In a few years afterwards it afforded me a handsome profit.

I perceive that I am now talking in the *singular* number, although our partnership still existed. It is, perhaps, because in fact the whole enterprise depended entirely upon my exertion. Meredith was not a compositor, he was nothing more than a poor pressman, and he but rarely abstained from drinking spirits. My friends were sorry to see me connected with him, but I managed matters as well as possible.

The first numbers of our paper made a far different sensation than any publication of the same kind that had yet appeared in the province, as well on account of the style, as the manner of printing. Some keen remarks which I made after my own manner, concerning the dispute which a little before that time had taken place between governor Burnet and the assembly of Massachusetts, struck persons as something above what is common, and occasioned a great deal to be said relative to the paper and its editor, so that in a few weeks we had a multitude of subscribers. Their example was soon followed by many others, and our subscription increased daily. This was one of the first good effects produced by my endeavours to communicate my ideas to paper. I also drew another
advantage

advantage from it, for the principal people in the province, perceiving me to be a man well calculated for my situation, thought it advantageous to themselves to do me every service, and encourage me by all means in their power.

Bradford still published the motions made in the assembly, the laws passed there, and all the other public proceedings. He had printed an address from the house of representatives to the governor, in a negligent and incorrect manner. We reprinted it with accuracy and elegance, and sent a copy of it to every member. They instantly perceived the difference, and this circumstance seconded the influence of our well-wishers in such a manner, that we were nominated printers to the assembly for the succeeding year.

Among my friends in that house, I ought not to forget one of the members, Mr. Hamilton, of whom I have made mention before, and who by this time had returned from England. He interested himself warmly on my account upon the present occasion, as he did on many others afterwards, having continued his kindness to me to the day of his death.

Mr. Vernon about this time reminded me of my debt to him, but without pressing me for the payment of it. I wrote a complimentary letter full of thanks in return, and besought him to wait a little longer, which he readily complied with, and as soon as it was in my power I paid him the whole, both principal and interest, at the same time testifying the great obligations

ligations I lay under to him, so that this error of my life was in some respect corrected.

But another embarrassment occurred, which I never expected to have experienced.

Meredith's father, who, according to agreement, was to have advanced the whole sum of money necessary for the payment of our types, press, &c. &c. had only given £100 sterling. There was as much more still due to the merchant, who became impatient for his money, and dunned us continually. We indeed gave him security, but we had the melancholy prospect before us, that if the money was not ready by the time agreed upon, a writ would be sued out, the judgment would be put in execution. all our fine projects would evaporate, and we should be intirely ruined, as the press and types would be sold, perhaps at one half of the original price, by way of liquidating the debt!

In the midst of this distress, two true friends, whose generous proceedings I never have, nor ever shall forget, while I am able to recollect any thing, came to me separately, and unknown to each other, and without my having spoken to them on the subject, each of them offered to advance all the money necessary, in order to enable me to take the business entirely into my own hands, if it should be practicable so to do, because they did not choose that I should remain in partnership with Meredith, whom, they said, they had often seen drunk in the streets, and playing at games of chance in the ale-houses, circumstances

cumstances which could not fail to be extremely disadvantageous to our credit.

These two friends were William Coleman and Robert Grace. I replied to them, that while any probability remained that the Merediths would perform that part of our agreement which they had undertaken to fulfil, I could not think of proposing a separation, as I was under a great obligation to them, for what they had already done, and what they would, doubtless, still do for me, provided it were in their power.

While things remained in this state, I said one day to my partner

“ Your father is perhaps discontented at your entering into trade along with me, and does not choose to do for two, what he would do for one. If this be the case, tell me so honestly, and I will repay you the whole sum advanced, and take the business into my own hands.”

“ No, (replies he,) my father has actually been disappointed in his hopes; he is unable to pay the remainder of the money, and I wish not to make him uneasy on the subject. I perceive at length, that I myself am not in the least qualified for being a printer: I was brought up as a farmer, and it was a foolish thing in me to come to town, and bind myself, at thirty years of age, as an apprentice to a new business. Several of my old acquaintances are about to form an establishment in North Carolina, where the land is extremely fertile and productive. I am tempted to go with
 14 “ them,

“ then, and resume my former occupation. You,
“ doubtless, may find friends to assist you. If you
“ will, therefore, undertake to pay the debts con-
“ tracted by the partnership, restore to my father the
“ hundred pounds he has advanced, liquidate my own
“ little trifling debts, and give me thirty pounds and a
“ new saddle, I will resign up my claim to every thing,
“ and leave the whole business intirely to yourself.”

I instantly accepted this proposition without the least hesitation. The terms were immediately committed to writing, and signed and sealed without any delay. I agreed to every thing he required, and he soon after set off for South Carolina, from whence in the course of the next year he sent me two long letters, containing the best accounts that had hitherto appeared, relative to that country, in regard to the climate, soil, agriculture, &c &c, for he was exceedingly expert in all those matters. I published this correspondence in my newspaper, and it was read with the utmost satisfaction.

As soon as he was gone, I addressed myself to my two friends, and not wishing to give one a disobliging preference over the other, I accepted of each of them one half the sum he had offered me, this was absolutely necessary for the settlement of my affairs.

I then paid the debts due by the partnership, and continued to carry on business in my own name, taking care to inform the public, by means of an advertisement, that the connexion was dissolved. I think that this was either in or about the year 1729

About

About the same epoch, the people began to be clamorous for a new emission of paper money, which had never been issued in the province to a greater amount than £15,000 sterling, and the notes were become exceedingly scarce.

The rich inhabitants, prepossessed against all paper of this kind, for fear lest the value of money should be lowered, as had been done in New-England, to the prejudice of all those who were creditors, opposed themselves to this demand.

We had often discussed the question in our *Junto*, where I had been always on the side that patronised the new emission, being fully persuaded that the first small sum, issued in 1723, had done much good in the province, by favouring commerce, industry, and population, as I perceived all the houses inhabited, and many more were then building, whereas I recollected very well, when I wandered, for the first time, along the streets of Philadelphia, eating my loaf, and looking around me, that I had seen most of the houses in Walnut-Street, and Second-Street, and Fourth-Street, as well as a great number of others in Chestnut-Street, and elsewhere, with bills upon them; a circumstance which made me then think that the inhabitants of Philadelphia would abandon it, one after the other.

Our frequent debates had put me so fully in possession of this subject, that I wrote and published an anonymous pamphlet, on “The Nature and Necessity of Paper Money.” It was well received by the public in general, but it greatly displeased the rich, because

because it increased and fortified the clamours of those who were in favour of a new creation of paper money. But being utterly destitute of a writer capable of making any reply, their opposition began to be mollified, and the majority of the assembly being in favour of the project, a law soon after passed for this purpose.

My numerous friends in that house, fully persuaded that I had been very serviceable upon this occasion, resolved to make me some little recompense by employing me to print the paper money: It was a lucrative job, and was of prodigious service to me. This was another advantage that I derived from a facility in managing my pen.

Time and experience so evidently demonstrated the utility and advantage of paper money, that it never afterwards experienced much opposition, so that it soon amounted to £55,000 sterling, and in 1739 to £80,000 sterling. Since that epoch it increased, during the late war, to £350,000 sterling. commerce, new buildings, and inhabitants continually increasing in the interval. I am however persuaded, that there are certain limits, beyond which the emission of paper money may become prejudicial.

I obtained soon after, by means of my friend Hamilton, the impression of the paper money belonging to Newcastle, another profitable piece of business, as I then thought it, little things always appearing great to those whose fortunes are moderate, and this was really uncommonly advantageous, because it was very encouraging to me. He also procured me the privilege

privilege of printing the laws and proceedings of that assembly, and this business constantly continued to be done by me, while I exercised the profession of a printer.

I afterwards opened a little shop for the sale of paper and stationery. I kept *blanks* of all kinds, and they were by far the most correct that had ever appeared among us ; I was assisted in this operation by my friend Brentnall. I also sold parchment, pasteboard, books, &c. &c.

A person of the name of Witemach, whom I had known in London, and who was a most excellent compositor, offered himself to me about this time ; I immediately employed him, and he worked constantly and diligently with me. I also took the son of Aquila Rose, as an apprentice.

I then began little by little to pay off the debt which I had contracted for my utensils, and on purpose to substantiate my credit as a tradesman, I took care not only to be *really* industrious and frugal, but even to avoid the appearance of the contrary.

I was clothed with great simplicity, and was never seen in any place of public amusement. I never went with parties of pleasure either to fish or to hunt. True indeed, a favourite book would now and then debauch me from my business, but this was but seldom the case ; and when it so occurred, it was in *private*, and *without giving scandal*. In order also to shew that I was not above my profession, I sometimes carried home the paper which I had bought from the merchants, in a wheel-barrow, which I rolled through the streets before me.

I thus

I thus begun to be generally known as an industrious young man, and one very exact in all his payments. the merchants who imported paper, solicited my custom; others came and made me the first offer of books, so that my little business went on increasing wonderfully.

In the mean time, Keimer's trade and credit began daily to decline, and he was at length obliged to sell off his goods in order to satisfy his creditors. After this he repaired to Barbadoes, where he lived for some time in great poverty.

His former apprentice, David Harry, whom I had instructed during my residence with Keimer, having purchased his materials, set up in his place. I was at first afraid that I should find a powerful rival in David, because he belonged to an opulent and respectable family. In consequence of this idea, I proposed to him to enter into partnership together, this, very luckily for me, he rejected with great haughtiness.

He was very proud and lofty in his manners, and talked and acted as if he had been a lord, he lived also at a considerable expence, and took a great deal of pleasure abroad. At length he began to run in debt and to neglect his business, and in consequence of this, *his business left him*. Perceiving in a short time, that he could procure no more employment in this country, he followed Keimer to Barbadoes, carrying his printing tools along with him. On his arrival in that island, the apprentice employed his *quondam* master as a journeyman. They often disputed and quarrelled with each other, and Harry, who once
more

more fell behind-hand, was at length obliged to sell his printing piers and types, and return to his former occupation as a farmer, in Pennsylvania. The person who purchased them from him, employed Keimer to work for him, but he died a few years after.

I had now no other competitor except Bradford, who being very opulent, contented himself with a small share of business, and was not in the least desirous of extending his trade. However, as he had the post-office, it was imagined that he was in a better situation to procure intelligence than I. His newspaper also possessed the reputation of enjoying a more extensive circulation than mine, and in consequence of this, he received a far greater number of advertisements, this circumstance was equally profitable for him and disadvantageous to me.

I distributed my newspapers regularly by means of the post, but the public was of a contrary opinion, because they knew that I could not accomplish this by any other means than that of corrupting the post-boys, who consequently could not take charge of them but by stealth, Bradford being envious enough to prohibit them. This mode of proceeding made me exceedingly angry, and I looked upon it to be so scandalous, that when in the course of a few years I found myself in his place, I was exceedingly cautious not to imitate him.

I had continued until now to board with Godfrey, who, with his wife and children, still occupied a part of my house, and half my shop, which was very servicable to him in his business as a glazier, it must
be

be observed, however, that he worked but very seldom, being constantly absorbed in his mathematical pursuits.

Mrs. Godfrey about this time took it into her head to marry me to the daughter of one of her relations. She was studious to find out opportunities of leaving us together, until she perceived that I was really *smitten* with her cousin, a circumstance not very difficult to be achieved, as she had great personal merit.

The parents encouraged my addresses, by inviting me frequently to supper, until they at length thought that it was time to come to an explanation. Mrs. Godfrey undertook to negotiate this business, and to bring the match between us to a conclusion.

I informed her that I expected to receive a sum of money along with the young woman, sufficient to enable me to liquidate the remainder of my debt for my printing tools. I believe that it did not then exceed the sum of £100 sterling. She returned me for answer, that her parents had not such a large sum at their command. I observed in reply, that they might borrow it any where upon the security of their house. At the end of a few days a message was brought me, that they did not approve of the alliance, and that having consulted Bradford, they had learned from him that the trade of a printer was far from being lucrative, that his types would be soon worn out, and that he would then be in want of others; that Kemmer and David Harry had failed one after the

the

the other, and that I should, in all human probability, follow their example.

In consequence of this, they forbid me the house, and shut up their daughter. I know not rightly, whether this proceeded from a change of opinion, or solely from an artifice, arising from the supposition that we were too far engaged with each other to desist, and that, in consequence, we should endeavour to be united together by means of a clandestine marriage, which would set them entirely at liberty, either to give or refuse their consent, as they should judge necessary.

Suspecting this to be their motive, I became piqued at their conduct, and never afterwards went near them.

Mrs. Godfrey told me some time after, that they entertained the most favourable dispositions in regard to me, and that they would enter anew into a treaty of marriage, but I declared that I was absolutely determined to have nothing more to do with the family.

The Godfreys having testified much resentment against me upon this occasion, we began to disagree, and at length found it inconvenient to live in the same house together, they therefore changed the place of their abode, leaving me the premises entirely to myself.

I resolved from that moment never more to let lodgings.

This affair having turned my thoughts towards marriage, I began to look around me, and make

overtures in other places, but I soon found that as a printer's was in general thought to be a very poor trade, I must not expect to get any money with a wife, at least if I wished her to possess any of the good qualities that could alone make a helpmate desirable.

In the mean time, that passion of youth, which is so very difficult to govern, often drew me into intrigues with low and loose women, who happened to fall in my way, so that this kind of life was not without inconvenience and expence, besides the perpetual risk of ruining my health, by acquiring some terrible disorder, which I dreaded above all other things in the world. I was however happy enough to escape from this calamity.

I had always kept up a friendly connection and intercourse with Miss Read's family, both as neighbours and old acquaintances. Her parents had entertained a regard for me, from the moment that I first lodged in their house. I was often invited to visit them, they consulted me upon all their affairs, and I was happy enough to be sometimes serviceable to them.

I was affected with the unfortunate situation of their daughter, who had become melancholy, was seldom seen to smile, and was attached to solitude.

I looked upon my wildness and inconstancy during my stay in London, as the principal cause of her misfortunes, although her mother had candour enough to attribute the fault to herself rather than to me, because she had not only prevented our marriage before
my

my departure, but had also prevailed upon her daughter to marry another person in my absence.

Our former mutual affection began once more to revive in our hearts, but there were many obstacles to our union. Her marriage indeed was looked upon as illegal and invalid, her husband, as it was rumoured, having a former wife, still living in England, but it was extremely difficult to have legal proof of this at so great a distance; and although it was reported every where that he himself was dead, yet we had not the least certainty of the fact, and even if it had been certified to us, he had left a great number of debts, for the payment of which his successor might have been troubled.

Notwithstanding all these difficulties, we were determined to be united to each other, and I accordingly espoused her on the first of September 1730.

None of the inconveniences which we had foreseen ever occurred, she proved a good and faithful companion to me, and assisted me greatly in the management of my shop.

We were exceedingly prosperous together, and we always endeavoured to render one another happy, thus I corrected, as well as I was able, this great error of my youth.

Our club did not as yet meet at a tavern. We assembled at Mr. Grace's, who had fitted up part of his house expressly for this purpose.

One of the members happened to observe, that as our books were often quoted as authorities relative to the questions proposed, it would be the

best mode to collect them in the place where we were accustomed to meet, in order that they might be occasionally consulted, and that in thus forming one common library out of our private collections, each of us might enjoy the advantage of making use of the books of the other members, which would be nearly as convenient as if one person possessed the whole

This idea was instantly adopted and carried into execution, and we all deposited what books we could readily spare at the bottom of the hall. They were not, however, so numerous as we expected, and although we made great use of them from time to time, some inconveniencies having at length arisen from want of care and attention, it was determined that each person should take home his own books again

About this period I formed a plan for establishing a circulating library. I drew up the *prospectus*, and put the conditions into a regular and legal form by the assistance of our famous lawyer Blockden, and my project succeeded to admiration, as will be seen hereafter.

[Here ends that Part of the Life of the late BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, LL. D. originally written by himself]

THE
L I F E
OF
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, LL. D.

PART II.

CHAP. I.

Franklin begins to distinguish himself as Conductor of the Pennsylvania Gazette—He becomes acquainted with Mr Whitefield—Establishment of the Philosophical Society of America—Experiments in Electricity—Discovery tending to demonstrate the Identity of Lightning and the Electric Fluid—Electric Kite—Metallic Conductors—Mode of preserving Houses from the destructive Effects of Lightning—Advice to those unacquainted with the Nature of the Electric Fluid.

WE have already beheld the author of these memoirs, rising from obscurity in spite of every obstacle, and by means of his own prudence and industry, struggling into wealth and reputation.

Hitherto he was only known as an active and intelligent young man, and was conspicuous for little else except his diligence and punctuality. But soon after his marriage with Miss Read he became proprietor of the "Pennsylvania Gazette," and in a short

time exhibited such an extent of capacity, as the editor of it, that he acquired a considerable portion of celebrity. This circumstance procured him a number of valuable friends, among whom was the Rev. George Whitefield, who, although then a very young man, displayed a wonderful degree of eloquence in his discourses, and possessed the rare and extraordinary talent of influencing the passions, captivating the hearts, and amending the morals of the multitude.

At that very period he was occupied in preaching his doctrines throughout North-America, and his success in so important a mission was unexampled. Having composed a volume of sermons, for the use of the sectarists of his own persuasion, who were exceedingly numerous, he employed his friend Mr. Franklin to print them for him, and the extraordinary success of this work tended not a little to extend the trade and connexions of the latter.

Although our author was uncommonly assiduous, both in his profession as a printer and in his business as a bookseller, yet he found means to consecrate a few hours of his time to the pursuit of his favourite study, which was natural philosophy.

A number of persons, eminent for their abilities, having determined, in 1743, to form themselves into a society for the propagation of knowledge, he was unanimously appointed to draw up the plan of the institution. This association, afterwards so celebrated under the name of the "Philosophical Society of
" America,"

“America,” is still in existence, and reckons among its members a number of celebrated men.

Within a few years after the establishment of this society, the number of its members increased so considerably, that it was judged proper to divide them into the following six committees.

I Natural Philosophy, Mathematics, Optics, Astronomy, and Geography.

II. Medicine, Chemistry, and Anatomy.

III. Natural History and Botany.

IV. Commerce and Navigation.

V. Mechanics and Architecture, and,

VI. Rural Economy, and the Amelioration of Waste Lands.

A prospectus of the plan was circulated over the continent, and the learned of all countries were invited to an amicable correspondence.

These measures were attended with the most ample success, and this institution began in a short time to assume a very respectable appearance.

Accustomed to see and examine every thing with his own eyes, to deduct consequences from the *phenomena* which he observed, and never blindly to follow the opinions of other men, Franklin soon acquired a vigorous judgment, a prodigious fund of knowledge, and a manner of reasoning at once precise, clear, and convincing.

Amidst a variety of commercial concerns, he found leisure occasionally to indulge his genius in philosophical speculations. Among these, electricity the least cultivated of all the branches of natural know-

ledge, more especially engaged his attention ; and he communicated his discoveries in that science between the years 1747 and 1754, to Peter Collinson, Esq. of London, a Fellow of the Royal Society.

These letters were afterwards published, and nothing written on the subject of electricity was ever more generally read and admired, not in Great-Britain and America only, but in all parts of Europe.

The English were rather tardy in acknowledging the merits of this great man, but foreign countries did ample justice to his genius, and even gave the name of the Franklinian System to his discoveries. In a word, his experiments and observations on this subject had soon to be handed down to posterity, as the true principles of electricity, in the same manner as the Newtonian Philosophy is acknowledged to be the true system of nature in general.

The greatest discovery which Dr. Franklin made concerning electricity, and which has been of the most practical use to mankind, is that of the perfect similarity or rather *similitudo* between electrical fire and lightning. He begins his account of this similarity, by cautioning his readers against being staggered at the great difference of the effects, in point of *degree*, since that can be no argument of any disparity in their nature. “ It is no wonder,” says he, “ if the effects of the one should be much greater than those of the other, for if two electrified gun-barrels will strike at two inches distance, and make a loud report, at how great a distance will 10,000 acres of electric cloud

“ cloud strike and give its fire, and how loud muff
“ be that report !”

HAVING discovered that metallic bars pointed towards the end, possessed the power of attracting the electric matter, at a great distance, and became in then turn electrified by their communication with the clouds, he communicated his ideas on this subject to the public, and a number of these insulated and pointed rods were erected in different parts of England and France. The first of these machines visited by the celestial fluid, was an iron bar forty feet in length, placed at the top of his summer-house, at Merly-la-ville, by M. Dalibard, this was electrified during the space of a whole hour, on the 10th of May 1752.

After having published the mode of verifying his hypothesis concerning the identity of electricity and lightning, Franklin determined to erect a pyramid at Philadelphia, in order to perform his experiments.

Recollecting at length, that a kite would have a more speedy and easy access to the regions of thunder, than any building elevated by human industry, he determined to carry this idea into practice. He accordingly adjusted a silk handkerchief to two sticks placed cross-wise. At the approach of the first storm he repaired to a field where there was an out house conveniently situated for his experiment, and in order to obviate the ridicule that but too commonly accompanies unsuccessful attempts for the promotion of the sciences, he took care to communicate his in-

tentions to no one but his son, whose assistance was absolutely necessary upon this occasion

Having launched his kite into the air, with a pointed wire fixed to the end of it, he soon succeeded so far as to elevate it to the proper height. It was a long time before he discovered the least appearance of electricity. A dense black cloud had already passed over his head without any effect whatever, and he began actually to despair of success, when happening to look with more than ordinary attention, he at length perceived a lambent flame to stream along the hempen cord. The lightning (for it was actually such!) descended along the string, and was received by an iron key tied to the extremity of it, while this was connected with his hand by means of a piece of silken cord.

What must have been his joy, when presenting his knuckles to the key at the end of the hempen string, he felt an electric shock, and found out that his discovery was complete!

He now clearly perceived the electric sparks, more followed in succession, and when the string became humid by means of the rain, it conducted the electric fluid with still greater freedom, so that it would stream out plentifully from the key, at the approach of a person's finger. At this key he charged phials, and from electric fire thus obtained, kindled spirits, and performed all other electrical experiments which are usually exhibited by means of an excited globe or tube.

This memorable and indeed wonderful experiment took place in June 1752, one month after his theory had been actually verified in France, but before

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he could have possibly received any notice of its success.

Having succeeded so completely with his electrical kite, Mr. Franklin determined to persevere in his discoveries. He accordingly erected an insulated iron rod, on purpose to draw the lightning into his house, to make experiments whenever there should be a considerable quantity of it in the atmosphere; and, that he might not lose any opportunity of that nature, he connected two bells with his apparatus, which gave him notice by their ringing, whenever his rod was electrified.

But this discovery, although it seemed to the ignorant and superficial to be only a matter of curiosity and surprise, was attended with consequences highly beneficial to the human race. The grand practical use which our author converted it to, was, to prevent buildings from being damaged by lightning. This he accomplished by fixing a metallic rod higher than any part of the edifice, and contriving it in such a manner as to communicate with the earth, or rather with the nearest water. The lightning was sure to seize upon the rod, preferably to any other part of the building, and that dangerous element, instead of committing its usual destruction, was harmlessly brought in contact with the ground, without doing any harm whatever.

His letters on electricity having been published in the philosophical transactions of the Royal Society, his fame continued to augment daily, and the university of Oxford soon after paid a just tribute to his talents,

talents, by conferring upon him the honorary title of Doctor of Laws, in the month of April 1762. At this period he had arrived at the zenith of his philosophical glory. The most distinguished men of the age began now to cultivate his friendship and to revere his name.

The letters of Dr Franklin abound with a variety of miscellaneous observations, highly important in their nature, as they tend to preserve the lives of men from the ravages of an element that has heretofore been considered as one of the scourges of humanity. The following passage will serve as a lesson to those persons unacquainted with the nature of the electrical fluid, who are accustomed, whenever they hear thunder, to take refuge either beneath trees, or under the shelter of lofty buildings :

“ When a tempest,” says the Doctor, “ passes over
 “ a country, high mountains, tall trees, elevated
 “ towers, pyramids, masts of ships, chimnies, and
 “ in general all kinds of eminences, attract the
 “ electric matter, and it is upon such objects as
 “ these that the clouds discharge themselves. It is
 “ extremely dangerous for any person to shelter
 “ himself under a tree during a storm, a great number of men and animals have been killed in this
 “ manner. It is much more safe to remain in the
 “ open field, and this for another reason. While the
 “ clothes are drenched with rain, if a flash of lightning, darting downwards towards the earth, should
 “ happen to come in contact with the head of the
 “ passenger, the fluid would be conducted all along the
 “ surface

“ surface of the body, by means of the wet. Thus
“ we have often seen, that a half-drowned rat cannot
“ be killed by the explosion of a bottle of electric
“ matter, whereas a rat whose skin is perfectly dry,
“ is instantly put to death.

“ These facts are proved by a multitude of ex-
“ amples. I shall only mention two. The first oc-
“ curred some years since at Lancaster, in the pro-
“ vince of Pennsylvania, in the manner I am now
“ about to recount.

“ Three children of that town, all of whom were
“ nearly thirteen years of age, went into the country
“ in the morning of the 24th of July, in order to
“ gather cherries. As they returned, about four
“ o’clock in the afternoon, they were overtaken by
“ a shower of rain, and although already wet, they
“ took refuge beneath a large oak, which they per-
“ ceived in the midst of the highway, and which was
“ about forty yards distant from any other tree
“ whatever.

“ One of the children leaned against this oak, in
“ such a manner that his head and part of his left
“ side touched the trunk. The other two sat them-
“ selves down at a certain distance, beneath the
“ shelter of one of its long and bushy branches. Se-
“ veral successive claps of thunder were now heard
“ in a westerly direction; the explosions become
“ louder and more frequent, at length the lightning
“ envelopes the tree, instantly kills the boy who was
“ sitting against its trunk, and also a dog that lay
“ between his feet, and overturns the two others,
“ who

“ who remain for some minutes entirely motion-
“ less, and without the use of their speech. At length
“ one of them acquires sufficient strength to rise,
“ but he seems stunned and enfeebled, and reels
“ backwards and forwards like a drunken person.

“ As soon as he was able to reflect on the cause
“ of this accident, he searches after his companions,
“ and perceiving that the one near him still evinced
“ some symptoms of life, he attempts to raise him
“ up, not succeeding in this, he proceeds towards
“ the other, whom he finds exactly in the same posture
“ as when alive, except that his body was incurv-
“ ated by means of the electrical shock which had
“ first struck him on the head. His eyes also were
“ open and immovable, and all his joints stiff, as if
“ they had been entirely deprived of articulation.

“ Scarcely recovered from his own fright, and
“ still more alarmed at this spectacle, the child ran
“ as fast as possible to the house of a person of the
“ name of John Stonner, to whom he recounted this
“ unlucky accident.

“ The two surviving children were immediately
“ put to bed, and recovered soon afterwards. I my-
“ self, accompanied by some friends, went to see
“ them. They were extremely sensible for their
“ years, and replied to all our questions in a very
“ satisfactory manner. Having asked them if they
“ heard any noise at the moment they felt themselves
“ struck, ‘ we heard a noise,’ said they, ‘ as if
“ a number of cannon had been fired all at once,’
“ as to the sensation, they observed, ‘ that it ap-

“ peared as if a large bundle of lighted wood had
“ fallen upon them, and enveloped them in its flame.”

“ After examining the bodies and clothes of these
“ poor children, and considering what an enormous
“ volume of the fluid they had been exposed to, we
“ were not able to conceive how it had been possible
“ for them to escape. The only manner of account-
“ ing for this *phenomenon*, (Divine Providence apart,)
“ is to suppose, that having been wet by the rain,
“ previous to their sitting under the tree, their
“ clothes had served as conductors to a great part of
“ the electric fluid.

“ The second instance took place at Savannah, in
“ Georgia, in the month of July 1773. In a vessel
“ destined for the Bahamas, and moored along-side of
“ the Key were twelve horses. The captain had cleared
“ out at the custom-house, and was about to set sail,
“ when all of a sudden a terrible storm came on, as is
“ often the case there at that season of the year.
“ The lightning struck the mast of the ship, and the
“ mast conducted it to the horses, of whom ten were
“ instantly killed. The two which escaped had just
“ come on board, and had but a few minutes before
“ been bathed in the river Savannah, a circumstance
“ which had probably saved their lives.”

Notwithstanding the accidents occasioned by light-
ning were very common, and generally very alarming,
in America, and the utility of the metallic conductors
was universally acknowledged, yet but few houses
were furnished with them on the new continent, nay,
several sectarists in Pennsylvania condemned the use

of them, saying, that it was “ rashness, and a want
“ of confidence in the first great Cause.” Notwith-
standing this, these people, so very full of *confidence*,
never rejected the assistance of medicine, and were
not afraid of being let blood, or of applying reme-
dies to the various disorders with which they might
happen to be afflicted

It was thus that Franklin employed the leisure part of
his life, in philosophical researches, in founding soci-
eties, propagating knowledge, and in communicating
a multitude of inventions useful to mankind. We
shall soon behold him attaching himself to political
investigation, bending his great and comprehensive
talents to the study of government, repressing the
tyranny of one nation, and teaching another to soar
at liberty and independence !

C H A P. II.

Our Author begins to be consulted upon Public Affairs—Letters to Governors Shewley—He proposes an Union between England and her Colonies—He assists the British Government during the War with France, and takes the Field in Person against the Enemy—His Influence on the Negotiations that were terminated by the Peace of Paris—He was forced, as well as the rest of his Countrymen, into the Scheme of Independence—The Success of the American Arms favourable perhaps to British Liberty

THE abilities of Dr. Franklin began now to be acknowledged by his own countrymen, and his judgment, penetration, and candour, as well as his readiness to suggest and carry into execution various schemes of public utility, deservedly endeared him to the inhabitants of the colonies. In the year 1754, when the French were making encroachments on the back settlements of North America, the following plan was proposed by government “That the governors of all the colonies, attended by one or two members of their respective councils, should assemble, and concert measures for the defence of the whole, erect forts where they judged proper, and raise what troops they thought necessary, with power to draw on the English treasury for the sums that might be wanted, and the treasury to be reimbursed by a tax laid on the colonies by an act of parliament.”

Dr.

Dr. Franklin, who was consulted on this occasion, communicated his opinions with great candour and liberality, and evinced, at this early period, a determined opposition to a project, which seems to have been the foundation of those future schemes that brought on the late horrible and destructive war. His letters are so interesting, and indeed so very prophetic of what would happen, in consequence of taxing the colonies without their consent, that we are happy in having it in our power to communicate them to the reader.

L E T T E R S

FROM

DR. FRANKLIN TO GOVERNOR SHIRLEY.

L E T T E R I.

S I R,

Tuesday Morning.

I RETURN you the loose sheets of the plan, with thanks to your Excellency for communicating them.

I apprehend, that excluding the people of the colonies from all share in the choice of the grand council, will give extreme dissatisfaction, as well as the taxing them by act of parliament, where they have no representation.

It is very possible that this general government might be as well and faithfully administered without the people as with them; but when heavy burdens are to be laid upon them, it has been found useful to make it, as much as possible, their own act; for they bear better, when they have, or think they have, some share in the direction; and when any public measures are generally grievous, or even distasteful to the people, the wheels of government move more heavily.

I am, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

LETTER II

SIR,

Wednesday Morning.

I MENTIONED it yesterday to your Excellency as my opinion, that excluding the people of the colonies from all share in the choice of the grand council, would probably give extreme dissatisfaction, as well as the taxing them by act of parliament, where they have no representation. In matters of general concern to the people, and especially where burdens are to be laid upon them, it is of use to consider, as well what they will be apt to think and say, as what they ought to think. I shall therefore, as your Excellency requires it of me, briefly mention what of either kind occurs to me on this occasion.

First, They will say, and perhaps with justice, the body of the people in the colonies are as loyal, and as firmly attached to the present constitution and reigning family, as any subjects in the king's dominions.

That there is no reason to doubt the readiness and willingness of the representatives they may chuse, to grant such sums for the defence of the country, as shall be judged necessary, so far as their abilities will allow.

That the people in the colonies who are to feel the immediate mischiefs of invasion and conquest by an enemy, in the loss of their estates, lives, and liberties, are likely to be better judges of the quantity of forces necessary

necessary to be raised and maintained, forts to be built and supported, and of their own abilities to bear the expence, than the parliament of England at so great a distance.

That governors often come to colonies merely to make fortunes, with which they intend to return to Britain, are not always men of the best abilities or integrity, have many of them no estates here, nor any natural connections with us that should make them heartily concerned for our welfare, and might possibly be fond of raising and keeping up more forces than necessary, from the profits accruing to themselves, and to make provision for their friends and dependents.

That the counsellors in most of the colonies, being appointed by the crown, on the recommendation of governors, are often (N. B.) of small estates, frequently dependent on the governors for offices, and therefore too much under influence

That there is therefore great reason to be jealous of a power in such governors and councils to raise such sums as they shall judge necessary, by drafts on the lords of the treasury, to be afterwards laid on the colonies by act of parliament, and paid by the people here, since they might abuse it, by projecting useless expeditions, harassing the people, and taking them from their labour to execute such projects, merely to create offices and employments, gratify their dependents, and divide the profits.

That the parliament of England is at a great distance, subject to be misinformed and misled by such

governors and councils, whose united interest might probably secure them against the effect of any complaint from hence

That it is supposed an undoubted right of Englishmen, not to be taxed but by their own consent, given through their representatives.

That the colonies have no representatives in parliament

That to propose taxing them by parliament, and refuse them the liberty of chusing a representative council, to meet in the colonies, and consider and judge of the necessity of any general tax, and the *quantum*, shews a suspicion of their loyalty to the crown, or of their regard for their country, or of their common sense and understanding, which they have not deserved

That compelling the colonies to pay money without their consent, would be rather like raising contributions in an enemy's country, than taxing of Englishmen for their own public benefit.

That it would be treating them as a conquered people, and not as true British subjects.

That a tax laid by the representatives of the colonies might be easily lessened, but being once laid by parliament under the influence of the representations made by governors, would probably be kept up, and continued for the benefit of the governors, to the grievous burthen and discontent of the colonies, and prevention of their growth and increase.

That a power in governors, to march the inhabitants from one end of the British and French colonies

to the other, being a country at least 1500 miles long, without the approbation or consent of the representatives first obtained to such expeditions, might be grievous and ruinous to the people, and would put them upon a footing with the subjects of France in Canada, that now groans under such oppression from their governors, who, for two years past, have harried them with long and destructive marches to the Ohio.

That if the colonies in a body, may be well governed by the governors and councils appointed by the crown, without representatives, particular colonies may be as well, or better, so governed, a tax may be laid upon them all by act of parliament for support of government, and their assemblies may be dismissed as an useless part of the constitution.

That the powers proposed by the Albany plan of union to be vested in a grand council representative of the people, even with regard to military matters, are not so great as those of the colonies of Rhode-Island and Connecticut are entrusted with by their charters, and have never abused, for, by this plan, the president general is appointed by the crown, and controls all by his negative, but in those governments the people chuse the governor, and yet allow him no negative.

That the British colonies bordering on the French are properly frontiers of the British empire, and the frontiers of an empire are properly defended at the joint expence of the body of the people in such empire. It would now be thought hard, by act of parliament.

ment to oblige the cinque-ports or sea-coast of Britain to maintain the whole navy, because they are more immediately defended by it, not allowing them at the same time a vote in choosing members of parliament, and as the frontiers of America bear the expences of their own defence, it seems hard to allow them no share in voting the money, judging of the necessity and sum, or advising the measures.

That, besides the taxes necessary for the defence of the frontiers, the colonies pay yearly great sums to the mother-country unnoticed. For taxes paid in Britain by the land-holder or artificer, must enter into and increase the price of the produce of land and manufactures made of it, and great part of this is paid by consumers in the colonies, who thereby pay a considerable part of the British taxes.

We are restrained in our trade with foreign nations, notwithstanding we could be supplied with many manufactures cheaper from them, but must buy the same dearer from Britain. The difference of price is a clear tax to Britain. We are obliged to carry a great part of our produce directly to Britain, and where the duties laid upon it lessen its price to the planter, or it sells for less than it would in foreign markets, the difference is a tax paid to Britain.

Some manufactures we could make, but are forbidden, and must take them of British merchants. The whole price is a tax paid to Britain.

By our greatly increasing the demand and consumption of British manufactures, their price is considerably raised of late years, the advantage is clear
profit

profit to Britain, and enables its people better to pay great taxes, and much of it being paid by us, is a clear tax to Britain.

In short, as we are not suffered to regulate our trade, and restrain the importation and consumption of British superfluities (as Britain can the consumption of foreign superfluities), our whole wealth centers finally amongst the merchants and inhabitants of Britain, and if we make them richer, and enable them better to pay their taxes, it is nearly the same as being taxed ourselves, and equally beneficial to the crown.

This kind of secondary taxes, however, we do not complain of, though we have no share in the laying on or disposing of them, but to pay immediate heavy taxes, in the laying on, appropriation, and disposition of which, we have no part, and which perhaps we may know to be grievous, must seem hard measure to Englishmen, who cannot conceive that, by hazarding their lives and fortunes in subduing and settling new countries, and extending and increasing the commerce of the mother nation, they have forfeited the native right of Britons, which they think ought rather to be given to them, as due to such merit, if they had been before in a state of slavery.

These, and such kind of things as these, I apprehend, will be thought and said by the people, if the proposed alteration of the Albany plan should take place. Then the administration of the board of governors and council so appointed, not having the representative body of the people to approve and unite

in its measures, and conciliate the minds of the people to them, will probably become suspected and odious, dangerous animosities and feuds will arise between the governors and governed, and every thing go into confusion.

Perhaps I am too apprehensive in this matter, but, having freely given my opinion and reasons, your Excellency can judge better than I, whether there can be any weight in them, and the shortness of the time allowed me, will, I hope, in some degree, excuse the imperfections of this scrawl

With the greatest respect and fidelity, I have the honour to be your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

L E T T E R III.

S I R,

SINCE the conversation your Excellency was pleased to honour me with, on the subject of a more intimate connexion between the colonies and Great-Britain, by allowing them representatives in Parliament, I have something further considered that matter, and am of opinion, that such an union would be very acceptable to the colonies, provided they had a reasonable number of representatives allowed them, and that all the old acts of parliament, restraining the trade or cramping the manufactures of the colonies, be at the same time repealed, and the British subjects

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on this side of the water put, in those respects, on the same footing with those in Great-Britain, till the new parliament representing the whole, shall think it for the interest of the whole to enact some or all of them. It is not that I imagine so many representatives will be allowed the colonies, as to have any great weight by their numbers, but I think there might be sufficient to occasion those laws to be better and more impartially considered, and perhaps to overcome the interest of a petty corporation, or of any particular set of artificers or traders in England, who heretofore seem, in some instances, to have been more regarded than all the colonies, or than was consistent with the general interest or national good.

I think too, that the government of the colonies, by a parliament, in which they are fairly represented, would be vastly more agreeable to the people than the method lately attempted to be introduced by royal instructions, as well as more agreeable to the nature of the English constitution, and to English liberty; and that such laws as now seem to bear hard on the colonies, would (when judged by such parliament, for the best interest of the whole) be more cheerfully submitted to, and more easily executed.

I should hope too, that by such an union the people of Great-Britain, and the people of the colonies, would learn to consider themselves, as not belonging to different communities with different interests, but to one community with one interest, which I imagine

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gine would contribute to strengthen the whole, and greatly lessen the danger of future separations.

It is, I suppose, agreed to be the general interest of any state, that its people should be numerous and rich, men enow to fight in its defence, and enow to pay sufficient taxes to defray the charges; for these circumstances tend to the security of the state, and its protection from foreign powers. But it seems not of so much importance, whether the fighting be done by John or Thomas, or the tax paid by William or Charles.

The iron manufacture employs and enriches British subjects, but is it of any importance to the state whether the manufacturers live at Birmingham or Sheffield, or born, since they are still within its borders, and their wealth and persons are still at its command?

Could the Goodwin sands be laded by banks, and land equal to a large county thereby gained to England, and presently filled with English inhabitants, would it be right to deprive such inhabitants of the common privileges enjoyed by other Englishmen, the right of vending their produce in the same ports, or of making their own shoes, because a merchant or a shoe-maker, living on the old land, might fancy it more for his own advantage to trade or make shoes for them? Would this be right, even if the land were gained at the expence of the state? And would it not seem less right, if the charge and labour of gaining the additional territory to Britain, had been borne by the settlers themselves? And would not
the

the hardship appear yet greater, if the people of the new country shou'd be allowed no representatives in a parliament, enacting such impositions? Now I look on the colonies as so many countries gain'd to Great-Britain, and more advantageous to it than if they had been gained out of the sea around our coast, and joined to its land, for, being in different climates, they afford greater variety of produce, and materials for more manufactures, and being separated by the ocean, they increase much more its shipping and seamen, and since they are all included in the British empire, which has only extended itself by their means, and the strength and wealth of the whole; what imports it to the general state, whether a merchant, a smith, or a hatter, grow rich in Old or New England? And if, through increase of people, two smiths are wanted for one employed before, why may not the new smith be allowed to live and thrive in the new country, as well as the old one in the old? In fine, why should the countenance of a state be partially afforded to its people, unless it be most in favour of those who have most merit? And, if there be any difference, those who have most contributed to enlarge Britain's empire and commerce, increase her strength, her wealth, and the numbers of her people, at the risk of their own lives and private fortunes, in new and strange countries, methinks ought rather to expect some preference.—With the greatest respect and esteem, I have the honour to be your Excellency's most obedient and humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

THE idea suggested in Letter III. of forming a more intimate union between Great-Britain and the colonies, by allowing them representatives in parliament, would, in all human probability, have been attended with the happiest consequences to both, for, in the first place, it would have entirely precluded a civil war, and in the next, by infusing a certain quantity of sound and untainted blood into the body politic, it might have repressed the gross degeneracy of latter times, and stemmed that torrent of corruption, which at present bids fair to sweep public virtue away from the face of the land.

During the war before the last, Dr Franklin was eminently serviceable to the British government, by encouraging his countrymen to repel with vigour the common enemy, on this occasion he commanded a company of artillery, and more than once headed the militia in several hazardous and successful enterprises.

When Canada was reduced, he came over to England and endeavoured, both by writing and conversation, to demonstrate to the then ministry, the superior importance of that province to all our acquisitions in the West-Indies, and as the peace of Paris was concluded upon this principle our author's arguments and information may be supposed to have influenced, in some degree, a measure so obnoxious at that time to the greater part of the nation, and which, as far as regards

regards the interest of Great-Britain alone, must be allowed to have proved highly impolitic.

There is every reason to believe that Dr. Franklin was stimulated upon that occasion, by a sincere desire for the security and prosperity of British America, as connected with the parent state, and that although he might have contemplated the future independency of the colonies, as an abstract question, he never could have been prevailed upon to make the experiment until he was forced, along with his countrymen, into a justifiable and meritorious opposition to a scheme, big with the most ruinous consequences to the inhabitants of America, and perhaps, had it proved successful, to the liberties of Great-Britain.

C H A P. III.

He becomes a Member of the Assembly of Pennsylvania—Is appointed Agent to several of the American States—Sails for England—Is examined before a Committee of the Privy Council—Insulted by the Attorney General—Departs privately for America

IT was not until after he had passed the meridian of his life, that Dr. Franklin displayed to the world, that his talents were no less adapted to politics than the sciences. His objections to the Albany plan, which we have already mentioned, his opposition to the *proprietary*, and his efforts in order to introduce the royal form of government into America in its stead, soon made him known to his fellow-citizens, and even to the English ministry, to whom he communicated a new plan for regulating the post-office in America. By way of recompense for this, he was appointed post-master general for the southern department.

Being furnished with all the qualities necessary for conciliating popular favour, he also obtained a seat in the assembly of Pennsylvania.

He was soon after appointed agent from that province, in order to superintend its interests in England, and was at that period held in such high and general estimation by his countrymen, that he was also nominated agent for the provinces of New Jersey, Virginia, and Georgia.

When the stamp-act, laying a certain tax upon bonds, notes, &c. was attempted to be imposed in 1766 by the British parliament, on the inhabitants of North America, it experienced the warmest and most decided opposition on the part of the Doctor, and this impolitic bill was at length repealed. He himself is accused of having been the original projector of this very act, but let it be recollected that it was not the duty, but the *mole*, that he then objected to, a mode which established the principle of levying imposts upon a people, without, and even contrary to, their express consent, and thus bereaved them of the right of representation. His examination before the house of commons in 1767, did him great honour, and the questions asked by the then administration, and his replies, which were extremely forcible, were circulated and applauded throughout all the colonies.

The Americans now began to be sensible of their own consequence, and the inhabitants of Boston, at a public meeting on the 27th of October 1767, entered into a variety of resolutions for encouraging manufactures, promoting economy, and restraining the use of foreign superfluities. These resolutions, all of which were highly prejudicial to the trade of the mother-country, contained a long list of articles, which it was either determined not to use at all, or at least in the smallest possible quantities.

A subscription was opened at the same time, and a committee appointed, for the increase of their old manufactures, and the establishment of new ones. Among other things, it was determined to give particular

ticular encouragement to the making of paper, glass, and the other commodities that were liable to the payment of the new duties upon importation. It was also resolved to restrain the expences of funerals, to reduce dress to a degree of primitive simplicity and plainness, and in general not to purchase any commodities from the mother-country, that could be procured in any of the colonies.

All these resolutions were either adopted, or similar ones entered into, by all the old colonies on the continent.

The Americans being well acquainted with their own rights, were determined to maintain them, and they accordingly opposed to the acts of a venal court, resolved to subjugate them to its authority, that calm and steady perseverance worthy of men who were determined to be free.

The English ministry having once more evinced a design to tax the *unrepresented* colonies, Dr. Franklin, who happened to be then in London, was examined before the privy-council, on the 11th and 19th of January 1774, respecting the state of America. On that occasion he displayed his usual firmness and capacity, although he was treated in a very unpolite manner by the then attorney general, who at this day presides as chief justice in one of the courts of law.

This unpolite conduct was borne by the philosopher with calm and dignified serenity. It is attested, however, that, after his examination, he passed

passed by the “pert, prim prater *,” in his way out, and took occasion to whisper the following truth in his ear “*I will make your master a little king for this !*”

Soon after this examination, the Doctor was removed from his employment as post-master general of the southern provinces of America, and was looked upon by the British government with such a jealous eye, that some thoughts were entertained of arresting him, under pretence of his having fomented a rebellion in the colonies. Having received intimation of their intentions, he left England in the beginning of the year 1775, and took his measures with such privacy, that he had actually arrived in America before he was suspected of entertaining any design of removing from the kingdom.

The act for imposing a duty upon tea had now put the whole continent in commotion. The flame of liberty spread with the rapidity of lightning, from New Hampshire to Georgia ; councils of safety were formed in all the provinces , and every thing indicated a speedy determination of that question, whether America was henceforth to be peopled by free-men or by slaves ?

* See Churchill's Works

C H A P. IV.

The Doctor, soon after the Battle of Lexington, writes circular Letters to all the Colonies—Copy of a Letter to Mr. Strahan, a Printer and Member of Parliament—The Americans are in want of Money, Arms, and Ammunition—Emission of Paper Money—The Vices of the People and their Leaders—General Lee a staunch Republican—The Congress declares the United States independent—The Doctor, at the Age of Seventy, repairs to France—The Success of his Mission—His great and important Services to America—His Return to his native Country

IN the spring of 1775, the Doctor *electrified* the whole continent by means of circular letters, written soon after the battle of Lexington. His bold and pathetic description of this engagement aroused the spirit of liberty in every bosom, and in some measure rendered a reconciliation impracticable between the mother-country and her colonies. Much about the same time, the following laconic epistle, addressed by him to Mr. Strahan, an eminent printer, at that time member for Malmisbury, and formerly one of his most inimate friends, appeared in the public papers.

“ MR STRAHAN, Philadelphia, July 5, 1775.

“ You are a member of that parliament, and
 “ have formed part of that majority, which has con-
 “ demned my native country to destruction.

“ You

“ You have begun to burn our towns, and to
 “ destroy their inhabitants !

“ Look at your hands—they are stained with the
 “ blood of your relations and your acquaintances.

“ You and I were long friends ; you are at pre-
 “ sent my enemy, and I am your’s.

“ BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.”

The disputes between Great-Britain and her colonies began now to assume the most serious aspect. Determined to persist in their opposition to the imposts attempted to be levied by means of English acts of parliament, it was necessary for the Americans to bethink themselves of adopting proper and efficacious means of resistance. They possessed little or no coin, and even arms and ammunition were wanting. In this situation, the adoption of paper money became indispensably necessary, and Dr. Franklin was one of the first to demonstrate the propriety of that measure: Without this, it would have been impossible to have made any other than a very feeble and a very short resistance against the mother-country.

The first emission, to the amount of three millions of dollars, accordingly took place on the 25th of July 1775, under a promise of exchanging the notes against gold or silver in the space of three years ; and towards the end of 1776, more than twenty-one millions additional were put in circulation. The Congress at length began to be uneasy, not knowing how it would be possible to redeem so large a sum ; and some of its

members having waited upon our author, in order to consult him upon this occasion, he spoke to them as follows "Do not make yourselves unhappy, continue to issue your paper money as long as it will pay for the paper, ink, and printing, and we shall be enabled by its means to liquidate all the expences of the war."

It is a certain fact, that, at the beginning of the disturbances, the bulk of the people acted from no fixed and determined plan whatever, and had not even an idea of independence, for all the addresses from the different colonies were filled with professions of loyalty towards their sovereign, and breathed the most ardent wishes for an immediate reconciliation. It is probable, however, that the principal leaders looked up to this as an ultimate, and perhaps necessary object.

The late General Lee in particular, inflamed with a republican zeal, travelled from colony to colony, stirred up a spirit of liberty in the breast of every American, and scorning to make use of dissimulation, with all the candour and openness of a soldier, publicly preached up the doctrine of independence.

At length this important question was agitated in Congress, the debate lasted for several days, and the scheme encountered the most violent opposition. It was combated by several distinguished orators, and in particular by Mr. Dickinson, author of the "Farmer's Letters," Mr. Wilson, a celebrated lawyer, and Mr. Galloway, who afterwards attached himself to the English government.

Doctor

Doctor Franklin, however, was firm as a rock, and remained inviolably attached to his darling scheme. No arguments adopted by them could make him abandon a system, the adoption of which he felt to be absolutely necessary; and most of his opponents at length seeing his unalterable determination, were induced to join with him in his plan.

After having gained this great and essential point, he perceived the immediate necessity of achieving something more. The continental paper money began to fall into discredit; arms, ammunition, and officers, were wanting; and without these, it would be in vain to combat the armies and the resources of Great-Britain. He therefore turned his eyes towards Europe, and fixed them upon the sole kingdom, whence he could draw the supplies necessary for the defence of his native country, and the preservation of her independence. He accordingly obtained a commission from Congress, and, in the 71st year of his age, repaired to France as their ambassador, persuaded that this was the proper theatre for the exertion of his talents, and that his reputation as a philosopher would conciliate the affection of a nation, whose interests were eminently connected with those of America.

He was right in his conjectures. He landed at Nantz on the 17th of December 1776, and the moment he arrived there, all ranks of men were eager to pay their respects to him.

Soon after his appearance at the court of Versailles, where he was received with every mark of distinction and esteem, he and Mr Silas Deane, his colleague, transmitted several memorials to Lord Stormont, the English ambassador there, relative to the exchange of prisoners; but that nobleman, with an aristocratic pride, worthy of the cause in which he was engaged, replied haughtily, "that he would not receive any letters from rebels, unless they contained a petition for pardon!"

In conjunction with Mr. Deane, he now granted letters of marque to a number of French-American privateers, which harassed the English coasts, and intercepted an immense number of merchantmen.

Lord Stormont immediately presented a memorial to the minister, and demanded a categorical answer relative to the conduct of France.

On this, Count de Vergennes affected to observe a greater degree of reserve in regard to the American plenipotentiaries, who were now but very rarely honoured with an audience.

At length the news of the surrender of the British army commanded by General Burgoyne, to that of the Americans under General Gates, at Saratoga, on the 17th of October 1777, arrived in France, at the very moment when the cabinet council was as yet undecided in regard to the steps to be adopted relative to the United States. This memorable event immediately inclined the balance, and fixed the French nation in their attachment to the infant republic.

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The news of the defeat and the capture of this British general, was received in France with as great demonstrations of joy, as if it had been a victory gained over their own enemies.

Franklin, with his usual address, took advantage of this circumstance, and hinted to the Count de Maurepas, “ that there was not a single moment to be lost, “ if he wished to secure the friendship of America, “ and detach her entirely from the mother-country.”

Fearful lest a reconciliation should take place between Great-Britain and her colonies, the court of France instantly determined to declare its intentions, and accordingly, on the 16th of December 1777, M. Gerard, secretary to the council, repaired to the hotel of the American ambassadors, and informed them, by order of the King : “ that after a long and “ mature deliberation upon their propositions, his “ Majesty had resolved to recognize the independence “ of, and to enter into a treaty of commerce and alli- “ ance with, the United States of America, and that he “ would not only acknowledge their independence, “ but actually support it with all the means in his “ power, that perhaps he was about to find himself “ engaged in an expensive war upon their ac- “ count, but that he did not expect to be reimbursed “ by them, that, in fine, the Americans were not “ to think that he had entered into this resolution “ solely with a view of serving them, since, independ- “ ently of his real attachment to them and their “ cause, it was evidently the interest of France to

“ diminish the power of England, by dis severing her colonies from her ”

On the 30th of January 1778, a treaty was accordingly signed and concluded at Paris, between France and America. This will ever form a memorable epoch in the history of mankind, because it was in consequence of this alliance that the insurgent colonies were able to resist the mother-country, and that the French nation, in the short space of ten years, acquired a fondness and attachment to the cause of liberty, that impelled them to vindicate their own rights, and put an end to a despotism at once disgraceful and humiliating to humanity.

The English ambassador about this time thought proper to leave Paris, and it has been affirmed, that the day on which Lord Stormont quitted the French capital, formed the happiest one in the whole course of Dr. Franklin's life

Hostilities commenced soon after this, between Great-Britain and France, and M Gerard was nominated by his most Christian Majesty, ambassador to the new States of America

Before his departure, our author communicated a plan to him, for surprising the British fleet and army then in the Delaware, and Count d'Estaing was employed to execute this important enterprise; which would certainly have proved successful, had it not been for a series of bad weather and contrary winds. In consequence of these unforeseen obstacles, the French admiral arrived too late upon the American coast,

coast ; for the English army had evacuated Philadelphia, and the fleet was then riding in perfect safety at Sandy-Hook.

The affection of the French for the Americans seemed to rise to a degree little short of enthusiasm. The portraits of the principal persons engaged in the revolution, occupied the pencils and the gravers of their most famous artists, while their lives employed the pens of their most celebrated writers. But among all these great characters, our philosopher was distinguished in a particular manner, and several of the provinces of France actually disputed the honour of having given birth to his ancestors, and endeavoured to prove, by the similitude of the name, that he was of French descent ! The following is an extract from the Gazette of Amiens, the capital of Picardy.

“ The painter to his most Christian Majesty” (says the editor) “ has exhausted all his talents upon a picture dedicated to the genius of Franklin. One beholds the philosopher holding in one hand the *Ægis*-of Minerva, which he opposes to a thunder-bolt, and with the other ordering the god of war to combat avarice and tyranny, while America, reposing upon his breast in a noble attitude, and holding in her hand a bundle of rods, the faithful emblem of the United States, surveys her conquered enemies with a look of tranquillity. In this composition, the painter has very faithfully copied the idea presented by the Latin hemistich, so frequently applied to him.

“ The

“ The name of Franklin is so celebrated, that it
 “ ought to render every one vain who bears it. It
 “ may be even permitted to a nation to claim the re-
 “ putation of having originally produced the family
 “ of a man so renowned, and we think that we have
 “ a right to dispute with the English that honour, of
 “ which they have rendered themselves so un-
 “ worthy.

“ Franklin, as ~~the very~~ name implies, appears at
 “ first sight to belong to the French rather than to
 “ their neighbours. It is certain that the name of
 “ Franklin, or *Franquelin*, is very common in Pi-
 “ cardy, more especially in the districts of Virneu and
 “ Ponthieu.

“ It is very probable that one of the Doctor’s
 “ ancestors inhabited this country, whence he
 “ passed into England either with the fleet under the
 “ command of *Jean de Biencourt*, or that which was
 “ fitted out by the nobility of the same province. In
 “ genealogical conjectures there are far more bold
 “ and hardy suppositions than this.

“ There also lived at Abbeville, during the fif-
 “ teenth and sixteenth centuries, a family of the
 “ name of Franklin. We find in the public registers
 “ of that city, that in 1521 a person of the name of
 “ John, and another of Thomas Franklin, were
 “ woollen-drapers at Abbeville. This family re-
 “ mained there until the year 1600. It then dis-
 “ perfed into the country, and some of its descendants
 “ are to be found at this very day at *Ar. le Chateau*.
 “ These

“ These observations are a new homage which we
“ offer to the genius of Franklin.”

All those devoted to letters and to science were ambitious to pay their respects to the philosopher of Philadelphia. Louis XVI. having instituted the Royal Society of Medicine, by letters patent, in 1778, Dr. Franklin was appointed one of the sixty corresponding members, his name having been put at the head of the list, by *the King's own hand*.

Thus our author enjoyed the satisfaction of seeing himself generally honoured and esteemed in France. His influence even extended to Spain and several other countries, where he kept up a correspondence that proved highly serviceable to the American cause.

“ All Europe,” says he, in a letter to a friend at Philadelphia, “ is united in our favour. They
“ have translated and published here, the institutes of the United States, a circumstance which
“ affords ample matter for reflection and speculation
“ to our politicians. The opinion of the best informed men is, that if you succeed in establishing
“ your liberty, the moment that peace is declared,
“ you will receive an immense addition of riches,
“ by means of the families who will be eager to leave
“ this hemisphere, in order to partake of your privileges. Tyranny is so generally established in
“ Europe, that the prospect of *an asylum* in America
“ causes an universal joy to all those who love freedom ;

“ dom; and your cause is already esteemed that
“ of the human race.”

The Doctor was soon enabled to draw considerable succour and assistance from his new allies, and in matters of finance the Congress more than once had recourse to his talents.

Out of the sums furnished by the court of France for the pay and support of the American armies, he found means to honour an immense number of bills drawn upon him from America, to advance the salaries of all the ministers employed in Europe, and to relieve the distresses of such of his unfortunate countrymen as had fallen into the hands of the English.

It is evident that the address, patriotism, and abilities of this philosophical statesman, were eminently serviceable to his countrymen, and it is more than probable that, without his aid, Congress would never have been able to have supported their armies at home, or acquired alliances and assistance abroad.

During the space of nine whole years, Dr. Franklin was engaged in the most important and active scenes, as minister plenipotentiary from America at the court of France. Having at length beheld the accomplishment of all his wishes, by the conclusion of a general peace in 1783, in consequence of which the independence of the United States was fully acknowledged and recognised, he became desirous of revisiting his native country.

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He accordingly requested to be recalled, and, after repeated solicitations, Mr Jefferson was appointed his successor. On the arrival of that gentleman in Paris, Dr. Franklin repaired to Havre de Grace, and crossing the English Channel, landed in the Isle of Wight. At this place he again embarked on board of the London Packet, Captain Truxton, and arrived in Philadelphia in September 1785.

C H A P. V.

Dr. Franklin arrives in Philadelphia amidst the Acclamations of his Fellow-citizens—Is elected Governor of Pennsylvania—Assists at the General Convention—Speech on the Conclusion of the New Constitution—The Effect of early Habits and Attachments.

ON his arrival in Philadelphia, Dr. Franklin was received amidst the acclamations of an immense number of the inhabitants, who flocked from all parts in order to see him, and conducted him in triumph to his own house. In the mean time, the cannon and the bells of the city announced the glad tidings to the neighbouring country, and he was waited upon by the Congress, the university, and all the principal citizens, who were eager to testify their esteem and veneration for his character.

In the month of October following, he was elected Governor of Pennsylvania, and he occupied that honourable office until October 1788.

The Americans, on the return of peace, did not enjoy all the advantages arising from their emancipation so suddenly as had been predicted. The credit of many of the States was at a very low ebb, some of them were torn with the intrigues of contending parties, the government was without either force or dignity; their commerce was circumscribed within very narrow bounds, and their merchants in general were not far removed from a state

of bankruptcy. In this posture of affairs, it was thought proper to assemble a general convention, in order to form a more energetic constitution.

The convention accordingly assembled at Philadelphia in 1788, and Dr. Franklin sat in it as the representative of Pennsylvania. At the conclusion of their deliberations, he rose and spoke as follows :

“ MR PRESIDENT,

“ I must frankly avow, that I do not approve the
“ whole of the present constitution, but I dare not
“ affirm that I shall never approve of it. I have
“ lived a great many years, and I have been obliged
“ twenty times, after more ample information, and
“ more mature deliberations, to alter my opinions,
“ even in matters of the utmost importance.

“ The more I have advanced in years, the more I
“ have learned to distrust my own judgment, and to
“ respect that of others. The majority of mankind,
“ like the majority of religious sects, think that they,
“ and they only, possess the knowledge of salvation,
“ and term every thing error and untruth, which
“ contradicts, or even differs from, their system.

“ A great English writer, in a dedication to the
“ Pope, says, ‘ the only difference that exists between
“ your church and ours, relative to the certainty of
“ their doctrines, is, that the church of Rome is in-
“ fallible, and that the church of England is never
“ in the wrong.’

“ Although most individuals have nearly as high
“ an opinion of their own infallibility, as that of
“ their sect, no person perhaps ever expressed this
“ opinion

“ opinion so naturally as a young French woman,
 “ in a trifling dispute with her brother : ‘ I do not
 “ know how it comes about,’ says she, ‘ but I can
 “ never find any person always in the right, like
 “ myself !’

“ It is in consequence of these sentiments, Mr. Pre-
 “ sident, that I adhere to the new constitution, and I
 “ adopt it with all its faults, if it has any, because I
 “ know we are absolutely in want of a *general go-*
 “ *vernment*, and that there is not any government,
 “ whatever may be its form, which cannot be made
 “ a good one, provided it be well administered.

“ I know also, that this which we have adopted
 “ may be well administered, during a number of
 “ years, and that if it at length should degenerate
 “ into despotism (an inconvenience which until
 “ this day no government has been able to avoid),
 “ this at least will not happen until the people
 “ become so corrupt, as not to be ruled by any other
 “ than a despot.

“ I know not neither, whether any similar assem-
 “ bly could make a better constitution, for whenever
 “ many men assemble together in order to communi-
 “ cate their knowledge and their sentiments, it is im-
 “ possible to prevent their prejudices, their passions,
 “ their errors, their local and personal interests, from
 “ *assembling* along with them.

“ From an association of men so composed, is a
 “ perfect work to be expected ?

“ I am indeed astonished to see that the system
 “ established by us, approaches so near to perfection,

“ I also

“ I also think, that it is admirably calculated to sur-
“ prise our enemies, who expected to hear that we
“ were in a state of tumult and confusion, that the
“ different States were on the point of disuniting,
“ and that the Americans would never meet but in
“ order to cut each others throats.

“ I adhere, Mr. President, to this constitution, be-
“ cause I could not expect a better; and because I
“ am not sure that it is not the best which we could
“ have.

“ I sacrifice my private opinion to the general
“ good; if I have thought that I discovered errors in
“ it, I have not said a single word on that subject out
“ of this house. These errors (if they really exist)
“ have originated within these walls, they ought also
“ to perish here. But if any of us, on our return
“ home among our constituents, permit ourselves to
“ repeat the objections we have heard urged in this
“ place against any part of the new constitution; and
“ if, in order to support our objections, we endear-
“ our to make partisans, we shall, in consequence
“ of this, lose the effects and advantages that ought
“ naturally to result from our unanimity, whether
“ real or apparent, as well in our own country, as
“ among foreign nations.

“ The force and efficacy of a government, as far
“ as it concerns the creating and insuring the happi-
“ ness of a people, depends greatly on opinion, I
“ say upon the opinion generally established of the
“ goodness of that government, as well as of the
“ sagacity and integrity of those who govern.

“ I hope, therefore, for our own good, for that
 “ of the people, and for that of our posterity, that we
 “ shall reunite every heart and every will upon this
 “ occasion, that all our efforts henceforth shall tend
 “ to make the constitution be beloved, cherished, and
 “ respected, wherever our influence may extend, and
 “ that henceforth we shall only occupy our minds with
 “ the best means of administering and enforcing it

“ I desire, above all things, Mr. President, that
 “ every member of the Assembly who may have any
 “ objections to make against the constitution, would,
 “ upon this occasion, doubt a little with me of his
 “ own *absolute infallibility*; and in order to manifest
 “ our unanimity, subscribe his name to this public
 “ act —I now, therefore, move, that the conclusion
 “ of this bill shall run as follows :—“ Enacted in Ge-
 “ neral Assembly, by the unanimous consent of all
 “ the, &c. &c ”

The above motion was instantly adopted.

This amiable and conciliatory discourse, which fully demonstrates, that an obstinate and pertinacious self-sufficiency formed no part of the character of this great and amiable man, was the last pronounced by him in public. As long, however, as his faculties remained in full vigour, he continued to publish political admonitions to his countrymen.

It is with difficulty that any one abandons the studies and occupations he has been accustomed to during his youth. Thus we have seen the Rev. John Wesley, while nearly in his ninetieth year, travelling through the kingdom, and propagating his religious tenets. Thus, also, the great Franklin, in

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an age nearly as advanced, continued to occupy his mind with his favourite ideas; to instruct the people by means of his writings; to excite their ambition by his example, and to improve their morals by his sage and benevolent conversation.

C H A P. VI.

Effects of Temperance — Dr. Franklin's Health becomes infirm — His second stroke — Dies in consequence of an Impassion — Character — Opinions concerning Death — Legacies — Testimonies of Foreigners respecting his Philosophical Inventions — Burial — Account of the Honours paid to his Memory — List of his Works — Epitaph

DURING the greatest part of his life, Dr. Franklin had enjoyed an almost uninterrupted state of good health, and thus he entirely attributed to his exemplary temperance.

In the year 1735, indeed, he was seized with a pleurisy, which ended in a suppuration of the left lobe or the lungs, so that he was almost suffocated by the quantity of matter thrown up. But from this, as well as from another attack of the same kind, he recovered so completely, that his breath was not in the least affected.

As he advanced in years, however, he became subject to fits of the gout, to which, in 1782, a nephritic cholic was superadded. From this time, he was also affected with the stone, as well as the gout; and for the last twelve months of his life, these complaints almost intirely confined him to his bed.

Notwithstanding his distressed situation, neither his mental faculties nor his natural cheerfulness ever forsook

forgot him. His memory was tenacious to the very last, and he seemed to be an exception to the general rule, that, at a certain period of life, the organs which are subservient to this faculty become callous, a remarkable instance of which is, that he learned to speak French after he had attained the age of seventy.

In the beginning of April 1790, about sixteen days before his death, he was seized with a feverish disorder, which at first did not exhibit any particular symptoms, but upon the third or fourth day was attended with a pain in the left breast. This at length became very acute, and was accompanied with a cough and a difficulty of breathing. He continued in this situation for five days, when the painful symptoms ceased at once, and his family began to flatter themselves with hopes of his recovery. But a new imposthume had now taken place in the lungs, which breaking suddenly as the others had done, he was unable to expectorate the matter fully. In consequence of this, an oppression of the organs of respiration, and a lethargic disposition, came on, which gradually increasing, he expired soon after.

Thus died, on the 17th of April 1790, in the eighty-fifth year of his age, Dr. Benjamin Franklin, one of the most celebrated and extraordinary men of which the present age can boast.

His life affords one of the finest moral lessons that can be offered up to the admiration, the applause, or the imitation of mankind.

As a man, we have beheld him practising and inculcating the virtues of frugality, temperance, and industry.

As a citizen, we have seen him repelling the efforts of tyranny, and ascertaining the liberty of his countrymen.

As a legislator, he affords a bright example of a genius soaring above corruption, and continually aiming at the happiness of his constituents.

As a politician, we survey him, on one hand, acquiring the aid of a powerful nation, by means of his skilful negotiations, and on the other, calling forth the common strength of a congress of republics, by fixing a central point to which they could all look up, and concentrating their common force, for the purposes of union, harmony, legislation, and defence.

As a philosopher, his labours and his discoveries are calculated to advance the interests of humanity. He might, indeed, have been justly termed the friend of man, the benefactor of the universe!

The pursuits and occupations of his early youth afford a most excellent and instructive example to the young; his middle life, to the adult, his advanced years, to the aged. From him the poor may learn to acquire wealth, and the rich to adapt it to the purposes of beneficence.

In regard to his character, he was rather sententious than fluent; more disposed to listen, than to talk, a judicious, rather than an engaging companion. He was what, perhaps, every able man is, impatient of interruption, for he used to mention the custom
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of the Indians with great applause, who, after listening with a profound attention to the observations of each other, preserve a respectful silence for some minutes, before they begin their own reply.

He was polite in his manners, and never gave a pointed contradiction to the assertions of his friends or his antagonists, but treated every argument with great calmness, and conquered his adversaries rather by the force of reason, than assertion. His sentiments respecting death may be gathered from the following extract of a letter, written near forty years ago, to Miss Hubbard, on the decease of her father-in-law, Mr John Franklin :

“ We are spirits. That bodies should be lent us,
“ while they can afford us pleasure, and assist us in
“ acquiring knowledge, or doing good to our fel-
“ low-creatures, is a kind and benevolent act of God.

“ When they are unfit for these purposes, and af-
“ ford us pain³, in the place of pleasure ; instead of
“ an aid they become an incumbrance, and answer
“ none of the intentions for which they were given ;
“ it is then equally kind and benevolent to provide
“ us a way, by which we may get rid of them.

“ Death is that way.

“ Our friend and we are invited abroad on a
“ party of pleasure, that is to last for ever. His car-
“ riage was first ready, and he is gone before us ;
“ we could not all conveniently start together, why
“ should you and I, my dear madam, be grieved at
“ this, since we are soon to follow, and know where
“ to find him ?”

Dr. Franklin left one son, Governor William Franklin, a zealous loyalist during the unfortunate American war, and a daughter married to Mr. William Bache, a merchant in Philadelphia.

His lady, who was a great favourite, attended him during his last illness. Three days previous to his decease, he begged that his bed might be made, "in order that he might die in a decent manner;" an idea evidently suggested by an acquaintance with the customs of the ancients. Mrs. Bache having replied, that she hoped he would recover, and live many years longer, he instantly rejoined, "I hope not."

He bequeathed the greatest part of his fortune to Mr. and Mrs. Bache for their joint lives, and ordered that it should be equally divided afterwards, among their children. To the Governor's son, William Temple Franklin, he left some lands in Georgia, the greatest part of his library, and all his manuscripts, besides something additional in case of marriage. He also left several public legacies, to the library of Philadelphia 3000 volumes, to Judge Hopkins, his philosophical apparatus, and to the President of the United States, his gold-headed cane.

The testamentary devise of the latter is as follows.

"My gold-headed cane, curiously wrought in the form of a cap of liberty. I leave to my friend, and the friend of mankind, General Washington, if it were a sceptre, he has merited it, and would be-
come it."

The most illustrious foreigners have testified their admiration of his philosophical labours. Beccaria, so celebrated for his Essay on "Crimes and Punish-
ments,"

“ ments,” to his curious treatise, intitled, “ Elettrico
 “ Artificiale,” has prefixed a complimentary letter to
 Dr. Franklin, in which he considers him as “ the
 “ father of electricity,” and speaks of his discoveries
 with enthusiasm.

“ To you,” says he, addressing himself to the
 American philosopher, “ it was given to enlighten
 “ the mind of man in this new science. It is you
 “ who have disarmed the thunder of all its terrors,
 “ and your daring genius has even taught the fire of
 “ Heaven, that was looked upon as the weapon of
 “ Omnipotence, to obey your voice !”

“ Newton,” adds the Chevalier de Chatelleux,
 in his discourse *De la Felicité Publique*, “ has dis-
 “ covered the laws of optics, and Descartes, of
 “ dioptrics. A great and magnificent discovery was
 “ reserved for these times—and this is electricity,
 “ the terrible effects of which have placed mankind
 “ on an equality with the gods of antiquity, for
 “ Franklin, like another Prometheus, has acquired
 “ the art of stealing celestial fire, and rendering it
 “ ductile to his laws ”

M. D'Alembert, upon his reception as a member
 of the French Academy, alluding to the success of
 his philosophical and political labours, welcomed
 him with the well-known line, which rivals the bold-
 ness and sublimity of Lucan .

“ Eripuit cœlo fulmen, sceptrumque tyrannis.”

And M. Dubourg, the first Frenchman who openly
 espoused the cause of America, placed the following
 inscription under his bust :

- “ Il a ravi le feu des cieux
- “ Il fait fleurir les arts en des climats sauvages .
- “ L’Amérique le place à la tête de ses sages ;
- “ La Grece l’auroit mis au nombre de ses dieux ”

All that was mortal of this great man, was interred on the 21st of April, in the cemetery of Christ’s Church, Philadelphia, in that part adjoining to Arch-street, in order that, if a monument should be erected over his grave, it might be seen to more advantage.

Never was any funeral so numerously and so respectably attended in any part of the States of America. The concourse of people assembled upon this occasion was immense. All the bells in the city were muffled, and the very newspapers were published with black edges. The body was interred amidst peals of artillery ; and nothing was omitted that could display the veneration of the citizens for such an illustrious character.

The Congress ordered a general mourning for one month, throughout America ; the National Assembly * of France paid the same compliment for three days ,

* *National Assembly, 15th June 1790.*

M Mabeau the elder, having demanded and obtained leave to speak, addressed the Assembly as follows

“ FRANKLIN IS DEAD ! ”

[*A profound silence reigns throughout the hall*]

“ The genius, which gave freedom to America, and scattered
“ torrents of light upon Europe, is returned to the bosom of the

‘ Divinity

“ The

days; and the commons of Paris, as an extraordinary tribute of honour to his memory, assisted in a body at

“ The sage, whom two worlds claim, the man, disputed by the history of the sciences and the history of empires, holds, most undoubtedly, an elevated rank in the human species

“ Political cabinets have but too long noticed the death of those who were never great but in their funeral orations, the etiquette of courts has but too long sanctioned hypocritical grief.—Nations ought only to mourn for their benefactors; the representatives of free men ought never to recommend any other than the heroes of humanity to their homage.

“ The Congress hath ordered a general mourning for one month throughout the fourteen confederated States, on account of the death of Franklin And America hath thus acquitted her tribute of admiration in behalf of one of the fathers of her constitution.

“ Would it not be worthy of you, fellow-legislators, to unite yourselves in this religious act, to participate in this homage rendered in the face of the universe to the rights of man, and to the philosopher who has so eminently propagated the conquest of them throughout the world ?

“ Antiquity would have elevated altars to that mortal, who, for the advantage of the human race, embracing both heaven and earth in his vast and extensive mind, knew how to subdue thunder and tyranny.

“ Enlightened and free, Europe at least owes its remembrance and its regret to one of the greatest men who has ever served the cause of philosophy and of liberty

“ I propose, that a decree do now pass, enacting, that the National Assembly shall wear mourning during three days for Benjamin Franklin”

M M de Rochefoucault and La Fayette immediately rose, in order to second this motion

The Assembly adopted it, at first by acclamation, and afterwards decreed, by a large majority, amidst the plaudits of all the spectators,

at the funeral oration *, delivered by the Abbé Fauchet (now constitutional bishop of Calvados), in the Rotunda, which was hung with black, illuminated with chandeliers, and decorated with devices analogous to the occasion.

Dr. Smith, Professor of the College of Philadelphia, and Mr. Ritzenhouse, one of its members, were selected by the Philosophical Society to prepare an eulogium to the memory of its founder, and the subscribers to the city library, who had just erected a handsome building for containing their books, left a vacant niche for a statue of their benefactor.

This was accordingly placed there a few months since. It was imported from Italy, the name of the artist is Francis Lazzarini; it is composed of Carrara marble, and cost 500 guineas.

It is the first piece of sculpture of that size, which has ever been seen in America. The following inscription, which perhaps says too much concerning the donor, and too little about the philosopher, is engraven on the pedestal:

THIS STATUE
OF
DR. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN,
WAS PRESENTED BY
WILLIAM BINGHAM, Esq

1792.

spectators, that on Monday the 14th of June it should go into mourning for three days, that the discourse of M. Mirabeau should be printed, and that the President should write a letter of condolence, upon the occasion, to the Congress of America.

* See a translation of this at the end of this volume

Dr.

Dr. Franklin is represented in a standing posture ; one arm is supported by means of some books in his right hand he wields an inverted sceptre, an emblem of his antimonarchical principles ; and in his left, a scroll of paper. He is dressed in a Roman toga. The resemblance is said to be correct, the head is a copy from the famous bust produced by the chissel of Houdon.

The works of Dr. Franklin are numerous, and fully display the versatility of his genius, for which nothing appears to have been too little or too great

I. Some Letters, which he addressed to Sir Hans Sloane, in the year 1726, when he was only 21 years of age.

II. Experiments and Observations in Electricity, &c made at Philadelphia ; in two parts. 4to, 1753.

III. New Experiments, &c. on the same subject. 1754.

N. B. These two last were published in one volume, in 1769, and contain, besides his experiments in natural philosophy, a description of his “ new-invented Pennsylvania fire-stoves” for the better warming of rooms with a small expence of fuel ; observations concerning the increase of mankind, and the peopling of countries, aphorisms on the nature and cause of evaporation ; observations on the nature of fire, the production of animal heat, the phenomena and probable causes of whirlwinds ; a comparison between the old Scotch and the modern Italian music, &c &c.

IV. An Historical Review of the Constitution and Government of Pennsylvania, 1759. Anonymous.

V. The Interest of Great Britain considered with regard to her Colonies, and the Acquisition of Canada and Guadeloupe. 1760. Anon.

VI. Political, Miscellaneous, and Philosophical Pieces, never before collected 1779. 4to and 8vo.

N. B. The papers in this collection are arranged in five different divisions.

The 1st contains essays on general politics.

The 2d, upon subjects relative to America before the breaking out of the civil war. These breathe throughout the spirit of peace and conciliation. They express the most anxious desire to unite and blend the interests of the parent country and her colonies in one common mass of public felicity; and to prevent every measure that had a tendency to estrange and alienate the two countries from each other.

The 3d contains papers written during the contest.

The 4th, papers on provincial and local politics.

And the 5th, all his philosophical and miscellaneous pieces not printed.

Among the papers in this division, we ought not to omit mentioning a production read by his countrymen with much avidity. It is called "The Way to Wealth, as clearly shewn in the Preface of an old Pennsylvania Almanack, intitled, "*Poor Richard improved.*" Dr. Franklin, who had for many years published "*Poor Richard's Almanack,*" in Philadelphia, furnished it with a variety of sentences and proverbs relative to industry, attention to business, frugality, &c. The greater part of these he at last collected, and digested in the above general preface.

VII. Phy-

VII. Physical and Meteorological Observations, Conjectures, and Suppositions.

N. B. This appeared first in the *Philos Trans.* vol. lv. for 1765; and in vol. lxiv. part i. for 1774, appeared his curious paper, “on the stilling
“ of Waves by means of Oil.”

In short, the aim of this great man was to be generally useful.

His Advice to Servants—to Settlers in America; his Rules for Clubs and Conversation, his Directions for the Cure of Smoky Chimnies, &c. &c. abundantly evince that he deemed no subject too humble for his pen, provided it might be serviceable to his fellow-creatures *.

The

* The following circumstance will evince how much and how generally this great man was beloved in France

On the 14th of June 1790, the citizens of Paris, imitating the example of the National Assembly, appeared also in mourning --- On the same day, the friends of the Revolution, and of humanity, assembled at the *Café Procope*, and wishing to render all the honors to the memory of the celebrated Franklin, which are so justly due to it, ordered all the glasses to be covered with crape, and the inner apartment to be hung with black On the door towards the street, was the following inscription

FRANKLIN EST MORT

(*Franklin is dead*)

At one end of the apartment, was placed his bust crowned with oak-leaves, and at the foot of the pedestal, was engraven the word

V I R

Two cypresses elevated their melancholy branches above it, on the two sides of it, were the celestial and terrestrial globe, charts, &c., and under it a serpent biting his tail, as an emblem of immortality

An

The following epitaph, written by himself, some years before his death, conveys at once a true idea of the simplicity of his manners, and of the ingeniousness with which he could make use of the terms of his original profession, as a medium for conveying his thoughts :

T H E B O D Y
O F
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, PRINTER,
(LIKE THE COVER OF AN OLD BOOK,
ITS CONTENTS TORN OUT,
AND STRIPPED OF ITS LETTFRING AND GILDING,)
LIES HERE, FOOD FOR THE WORMS,
YET THE WORK ITSELF SHALL NOT BE LOST,
FOR IT SHALL, AS HE BELIEVES,
APPEAR, ONCE MORE,
IN A NEW
AND MOST BEAUTIFUL EDITION,
CORRECTED AND REVISED
BY
THE AUTHOR.

An orator read a simple but pathetic discourse, in which he recounted the benefits this illustrious Philosopher had conferred upon mankind, and in order to honour his *manes* in a manner still more worthy of him, on the preceding day, a quantity of bread bought by subscription, in which every one was eager to concur, was distributed among the people.

PART III.

COLLECTION

OF

FRAGMENTS, ANECDOTES, &c. &c.

RELATING TO

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, LL.D.

* **T**HE American Revolution has produced a multitude of virtuous citizens, intrepid warriors, and enlightened politicians ; but we have seen no one possess, in so high a degree, the character of a true philosopher, as Dr. Benjamin Franklin. His love of mankind occupied every instant of his life ; and he displayed the most indefatigable zeal in their service. His knowledge was great and extensive, his manners were simple, his morals were pure.

This portrait will not afford a line of separation sufficiently marked between him and other patriot politicians, if I do not add a characteristic feature to

* Translated from the *Patriote François* of M. Brissot de Warville, a member of the National Assembly and National Convention of France.

it, this is, that Franklin, in the midst of the vast scene in which he acted such a brilliant and conspicuous character, kept his eyes constantly fixed on a theatre infinitely more vast and extensive,—on Heaven, and a future life! This is the sole circumstance that can support and aggrandize man upon earth, and make of him a true philosopher.

The different anecdotes recounted in the first part of his private life, might afford, to an attentive observer, some idea of his character; and it indeed appears to me to be impossible to read it, without a certain degree of tenderness, mingled with respect — It exhibits Franklin strolling about the streets of Philadelphia with about four-and-sixpence in his pocket, unknown to any of the inhabitants, eating one loaf with avidity, holding another under each arm, and quenching his thirst with the water of the Delaware!

Who could have dreamed that this miserable wanderer should become one of the future legislators of America; the ornament of the new world; the pride of modern philosophy, and an ambassador to a nation the most rich, the most powerful, and the most enlightened in the universe?

Who could have believed that France, that Europe, should one day elevate statues to a man, who had nowhere to repose his head?

This circumstance recalls to my memory J. J. Rousseau, with three halfpence (his whole fortune) in his purse, and tormented by famine, balancing in his own mind whether he ought to sacrifice his all,
in

in order to procure a supper, or a bed ! After putting an end to this combat between rest and hunger, he lies down, and falls asleep in the open air, and thus, seemingly abandoned by nature and by men, he enjoys the protection of the one, and despises that of the other. The citizen of Lyons, who disdained Rousseau because he was ill clothed, has died unknown, and the man in rags, has now altars erected to his memory.

These examples ought to console men of genius, who have been reduced by fortune to a similar condition, and who are obliged to struggle against want.

Adversity is calculated to form them, let them persevere, and the same recompense awaits them.

Puritanism, with all its hideous austerity, at one time reigned in the colony of Massachusetts. It appears, from many circumstances, however, that Franklin, even while a boy, knew how to appreciate this religious grimace.

As his father was accustomed to precede all his meals with long prayers, and even to say grace over every particular dish, he was desirous to correct this folly by means of the following fally of wit :

Old Franklin, one day, at the beginning of winter, being busied in salting provisions, " Father," says his son, " you ought to ask a blessing, once for all, upon the whole cask of provisions, *as it would be a wonderful saving of time* !"

Young Benjamin fully displayed his future character in the concluding observation, the principle of which formed the basis of all his politics.

Franklin being persuaded that knowledge could never spread, unless it had been first collected in a central point, as it were, was always extremely desirous to encourage literary, and political clubs. In one of these clubs, founded by him, the following were the questions put to the candidate.

“ Do you believe, that a man ought to be despised
 “ or persecuted for opinions merely speculative, on
 “ account of any particular faith that he may hap-
 “ pen to profess ?”

“ Do you love truth, for its own sake ?”

“ Will you employ all your efforts, in order to
 “ know it yourself, and to instill it into others ?”

* Having, during his residence in England, remarked the advantages resulting from newspapers, and associations, known under the denomination of *Clubs*, and societies formed on the basis of a voluntary subscription, Franklin proposed to make them adopted by his native country

He accordingly began by publishing a Gazette, the columns of which he filled up, during a scarcity of news, by means of essays of his own composition, in which the moral was generally presented under the form of an apologue, in which reason was animated by gay but amiable pleasantries, and in which philosophy, without ceasing to be within the comprehension of the simple colonists for whom it was destined, was on a level with the ideas of an European.

* Translated from the “ Eloge de Franklin,” by the celebrated Condorcet

It was a new Spectator, as it were, that he produced, but with much more nature, simplicity, and grace, with an aim more extended, and, above all, more useful

Instead of the uncertain hope of correcting some few of the vices of a nation, corrupted by riches and inequality, he conceived a reasonable expectation of rectifying the ideas, of depurating and polishing the virtues of a nascent people

Several of the fugitive pieces printed at that period by Franklin, have been preserved, and there are some of them, which Voltaire and Montesquieu would not have disavowed.

He would never permit his journal to be disgraced by *personalities*. This species of malice, which presents the ready means of drawing down the popular vengeance upon those whom an editor is inclined to hate, appeared to him to be equally hurtful and dangerous. It seemed to furnish a perfidious kind of arms, which the hypocritical and the factious might use with address, in order to provoke suspicion against virtues and talents the most eminent, to render all reputations uncertain, to destroy character, and the authority of a good name, a circumstance so necessary in an infant republic, and then deliver up the public confidence to those obscure and intriguing men who know how to surprise it.

The Americans were not then that enlightened people, who have since astonished us by the wisdom of their constitutions. Religion, and the incessant labour necessary to form establishments in a wild and

lavage country, had alone occupied the minds and the bodies of the first generations of Europeans.

Franklin perceived how much they stood in need of the light of philosophy ; but it was necessary to make them feel this, without announcing an intention, which would have but too plainly discovered his own superiority.

He accordingly formed a club, composed of several of the inhabitants of Philadelphia, whose fortunes were on a level with his own. It consisted of only twelve persons, and the number was never augmented. But in consequence of his advice, the majority of the members established similar associations, by this means, they all became animated with the same spirit ; but he was careful not to connect them by a solemn confederation, and still less by a dependence upon the mother society.

It was his intention to form a more liberal communication of knowledge, and of sentiments, among the citizens ; to habituate them to the custom of acting together in behalf of their common interests, and to enable them to propagate and disperse their opinions, without forming a party.

He thought that if a private association ought never to conceal itself, it ought still less to exhibit itself to public view ; that useful, while it acts by the separate interests of its members, by the concert of their intentions, by the weight which their virtues or their talents give to their opinions, it might become dangerous, if, operating in a mass, and forming in some respects a nation within a nation, it should be at
length

length able to oppose its own will to that of the people, and to place between individuals and the national power, a foreign force, which, directed by an ambitious man, might equally menace liberty and the laws *.

It is customary, in the English clubs, to subject all those to a slight fine, who transgress their laws. In that of Philadelphia, a slight fine was levied every time an improper expression was made use of.—Those most obstinate in the belief of their own *infallibility*, were obliged to make use of a certain diffidence in their assertions, and to adopt a degree of modest circumlocution, that prevented the self-love of the company from being shocked by the powerful influence of words upon ideas,—this at length extended even to opinions †.

* This idea is perhaps adapted only to an established common wealth. What could France have opposed to the treachery of the Executive Power, save and except a club, to which (however unpopular it may now be) the empire is indebted for its liberties ?

† “ 1mo, To declare that the candidate had no animosity against any of the members of the assembly

“ 2do, To profess an equal degree of love for all men, whatever might be their faith.

“ 3tio, To look upon every attempt against the independence of religion, and of opinion, to be tyranny.

“ 4to, To love the truth for its own sake—to take pleasure in extending and propagating it.

“ This,” says M. Condorcet, “ was the profession of faith of a society which rendered great service to the Assembly of Pennsylvania, without ever pretending to govern it.”

In the mean time, Franklin began, in an adroit manner, to declare war against fanaticism, which of course must have taken deep root in a country peopled by persecution. Those sentiments of universal benevolence, which so easily enter into mild and gentle minds; those maxims of simple truth which good sense never rejects, conduct, by little and little, to indulgence, and to reason, and at least reduce to a state incapable of doing them hurt, that enemy to mankind, which it would have been imprudent to have attacked in front.

Thus, at the very same epoch, in two different parts of the globe, philosophy avenged humanity of the tyranny which had a long while oppressed and dishonoured it; but it combated her with different weapons.

In the one, fanaticism was an error of individuals, and the unhappy consequence of their education and their studies; to enlighten them, it was sufficient to dissipate the phantoms of a wandering imagination. In fine, it was only the fanatics themselves that it was necessary to cure.

In the other, where fanaticism, guided by politics, had founded upon error a system of domination, and where, leagued with every species of tyranny, it had promised to blind mankind, provided it was permitted to oppress them, it became necessary to rear up against it the whole force of public opinion, and to oppose, to so dangerous a power, all the efforts of the friends of reason and of liberty. The business there, was not to enlighten the fanatics, but

to unmask and disarm them. One might add to this parallel, new in the history of philosophy, that Voltaire and Franklin, the two men who had separately, but at one and the same time, conceived this salutary project, had the happiness to meet, in their old age, at Paris—to enjoy their glory together, and congratulate each other upon their triumph.

The philosopher, who prepared the felicity of his country by enlightening men, and forming them into citizens, was destined to render it services still more direct, and no less useful. The times were no longer such, as when the poverty of the English colonies was sufficient to prevent the wars of Europe from extending to them. They had already become sufficiently flourishing to tempt the avidity of an enemy; and it was equally dangerous for their repose and their liberty, to be either abandoned by Great-Britain, or defended by its armies.

Dr. Franklin, who, ever since the year 1736, had acted as Secretary to the Assembly of Pennsylvania, thought that it would be proper to profit by a war in which England was so nearly interested, in order to teach the Pennsylvanians to assume, for the defence of the mother country, those arms which would be one day necessary against herself, for the maintenance of their own rights; and accordingly, in 1744, he formed the plan of a national militia.

The people relished the proposal, Philadelphia alone furnished a thousand men. The command was offered to Franklin, he refused it, and served as a common soldier under Mr. Laurence, whom he
himself

himself had proposed as the fittest person to act as General.

It was necessary to build forts, and money was wanting, he provided the necessary sums by means of a lottery, of which he himself formed the plan.

The success of this measure was retarded for some time, by a very singular difficulty.

The Quakers form a very numerous body in Pennsylvania, and such is the purity of the principles of that sect, that they look upon it as criminal, to contribute money even in behalf of a defensive war. The natural effect of an exaggerated morality, adopted by enthusiasm, is to place its sectarists under the necessity of either violating its precepts, or of sacrificing the counsels of reason, and the dictates of judgment. At length they endeavour to elude their own laws, they dissemble the violation of them by means of subtle distinctions, and by adroit and equivocal modes of reasoning. By these means, they prevent the fanatics and hypocrites of their own sect from rising against them, and do not wound the feelings of the people, who, in all religions, attach their ideas of moral ty to certain consecrated words *.

The

* It is thus that the Quakers, on being solicited for money in order to purchase gunpowder, presented the sum demanded, *under the pretence* of its being intended for corn. The Dunkars, more wise perhaps than the Quakers, have never committed their *dogmas* nor their precepts to writing. They were afraid, as one of their principal men told Dr Franklin, of either exposing themselves to the danger of professing that which they did not any longer believe, or to the shame of having changed their opinions.

The philosophical indulgence of Dr. Franklin, and the address which he made use of upon more than one occasion, often enabled him to conciliate the patriotism of the Quakers with the principles of their sect.

Never was any man more anxious to exhibit the most scrupulous respect for the religious weaknesses and follies of other men; towards feeble and sickly minds, he ever evinced the same delicate attentions, which worthy men generally make use of in regard to the infirmities of infancy.

The education of Dr. Franklin had not opened to him the career of the sciences, but nature had given him a genius capable of comprehending, and even of embellishing them.

His first essays on electricity fully prove, that he was but very little acquainted with this part of natural philosophy. Being at an immense distance from Europe, he possessed but imperfect machines. Notwithstanding this disadvantage, he soon discovered the immediate cause of electrical *phenomena*. He explained it, by demonstrating the existence of a fluid, insensible while it remains in a state of equilibrium, and which instantly manifests itself, either when this equilibrium is destroyed, or while it endeavours to re-establish it. His Analysis of the grand Leyden experiment, is a *chef-d'œuvre* at once, of sagacity, of perspicacity, and of art.

Soon after this, he perceived an analogy between the effects of thun'ers and electricity, which struck him prodigiously. He conceived the idea of an apparatus,

paratus, by means of which, he proposed to interrogate the heavens, he makes the experiment, and the answer fully confirms his conjectures. Thus the cause of lightning is now known. Its effects, so ruinous, so irregular in appearance, are not only explained, but imitated

We at length know why the lightning silently and peaceably follows certain bodies, and disperses others with a loud noise, why it melts metals, sometimes shivers to atoms, and sometimes seems to respect, those substances which surround it.

But it was but little to imitate the thunder. Dr Franklin conceived the audacious idea of averting its vengeance.

He imagined, that a bar of iron, pointed at the end, and connected with the ground, or rather with the water, would establish a communication between a cloud and the earth, and thus guarantee or protect the objects in the immediate neighbourhood of such a conductor.

The success of this idea was fully commensurate to all his wishes, and thus man was enabled to wield a power sufficient to disarm the wrath of Heaven

This great discovery was by far too brilliant, and too singular, not to conjure up a numerous host of enemies against it. Notwithstanding this, the custom of using conductors was adopted in America and in Great Britain, but at the commencement of war with the northern country, the English philosophers endeavoured, by unfair experiments, to throw doubts upon the utility of his scheme, and seemed to indi-

cate

cate a wish to ravish this discovery from Benjamin Franklin, by way of punishing him for the loss of thirteen colonies.

It is unfortunately more easy to mislead a nation in regard to its proper interests, than to impose upon men of science relative to an experiment, thus those prejudices, which were able to draw England into an unjust and fatal contest, could not make the learned of Europe, change the form of the electrical conductors. They multiplied in France, after France had become allied to America, in truth, the sentence of the police has been opposed to it in some of our towns, as it has been opposed in Italy by the decisions of casuists, and with just as little success !

In a free country, the law follows the public opinion, in despotic governments, the public opinion often contradicts the laws, but always concludes at length by submitting itself to their influence.— At this day, the use of this preservative has become common among almost all nations, but without being universally adopted. A long course of experiments does not permit us any longer to doubt of its efficacy.

If the edifices provided with it, have still some dangers to dread, this happens, because, between the bounded efforts of man, and the boundless force of nature, there can never be established any other, but an unequal contest.

But what an immense career has this successful experiment opened to our hopes ?

Why may we not one day hope to see the baneful activity of all the scourges of mankind melt away,

as that of thunder has done, before the powers of genius, exercised through immensity of ages, when all the regions of nature are disarmed by the happy use of her gifts, we shall experience nothing but her benefits?

In 1754, the King of England, who had formed the project of attacking France, convoked a general congress of the deputies of the different colonies, in order to concert a system of common defence. Dr. Franklin was sent thither, and proposed a plan, which was accepted by the Congress, but it was neither agreeable to the assemblies of the particular States, nor to the British ministry. No menace had as yet made the colonies perceive the necessity of this union, which was about to take away from each a part of its independence; and the English government was at one and the same time too cunning not to foresee that this new institution prepared a resistance to its tyrannical enterprises, and was too little enlightened to know, that nothing remained for it but to direct a revolution, which was an inevitable consequence of the increasing prosperity of the colonies. Indolence or pride on one side, and perfidy on the other, occasioned the rejection of a scheme formed by foresight and traced by wisdom.

Twenty-four years afterwards, it served as a basis to that Congress which declared the independence of the United States, and perhaps it would have been a *desideratum* in the new constitution, to have imitated more its sage simplicity

It has been urged as a reproach to Franklin, that he had given a *negative* to the governor appointed by

the King of Great Britain, but circumstances required this sacrifice, it was the band that would have connected a sucker, at that time young and tender, to the parent tree, from which it had sprouted forth; and which ought not to have been cut until the moment that the young plant, after having extended its roots, and developed its branches, had acquired sufficient vigour to nourish it by means of its own proper strength.

While he remained in England, in quality of agent for the American provinces, the ministers sometimes deigned to consult him. They affected, however, to regard all those who happened not to be of their way of thinking, as enemies to Great Britain. This was no other than announcing, that they wished to be deceived; and the governors of the colonies understood this but too well.

Notwithstanding this, Franklin, faithful to his principles, continued alone to tell the truth. Therefore, not content with taking away from him a place which he held in America*, and to which they had no longer the power to appoint a successor, they stopped the arrears of his salary, and at last commenced a prosecution against him.

These processes, in a free country, are the *lettres de cachet* of its ministers, and it is in this manner that, a few years before, they found means to be avenged of

* The office of Post Master General for the Southern Department. TRANS

Mr. Wilkes *. The present, however, was not attended with any disagreeable circumstances ; they could not find a pretext in any existing law for condemning him, and the ministerial vengeance was obliged to be content with the outrages of a lawyer, whose complaisance has since been recompensed by a peerage †.

At the epoch when Franklin was sent to France, this country did not possess a free constitution, but the French could not be properly termed slaves. If the people groaned beneath an arbitrary government, and still more under the yoke of bad laws, *their souls were not subjugated*, for their minds still preserved their independence.

It did not resemble a nation where there does not exist but a despot, a treasury, and an army, it was not indifferent that a war was conformable or contrary to the national will, for the French were already thought worthy of being consulted, their mi-

* The interest which ministers have in preserving the means of indirect oppression, is one of the principal obstacles to the perfection of the laws of England

Criminal laws, which are vague, or which enact penalties against actions innocent in themselves, civil laws, obscure in their nature, and explained by tribunals which either by their constitution, or their want of independence, are not altogether unexposed to influence, are so many instruments, which either indolence or corruption, leave too often in the hands of despotism. Every nation that wishes to remain free, ought to hasten to snatch that odious power from the hands that wield it. CONDORCET

† M. Condorcet seems to be mistaken in this particular, a process was indeed threatened, but it was never commenced. TRANS-

nisters

nisters following the policy adopted among free nations, before they commenced a war, waited until it was solicited by the voice of the people.

As a negotiator, Franklin observed much, but did little.

He wisely left to the ministers of the allied powers, to decide on the manner of attacking England and succouring America, for fear lest the bad success of any measure imputed to his counsels, or to his demands, should cool their zeal.

It was in order to maintain in France an idea of the constancy and resources of America, and to support that enthusiasm created by himself, that he employed all his pains and attention, until, perceiving the approaching disgrace of the English ministry, who had commenced and carried on the war, he foresaw that his native country was about to be declared independent.

He beheld the auspicious moment at length arrive ; and signed, with a tranquil hand, that treaty which assured the freedom and the glory of America , he had ever contemplated, with a firm eye, her dangers and her sufferings.

This calmness of mind did not proceed from indifference , it was the result of a sincere conviction, that the independence of America was to be bought at a larger or a smaller price, and recognised some years sooner or later—but that it could never be in danger of being lost.

These were the reflections of a man, who knew that the moral is subjected, like the natural world, to certain laws ; and who anticipated, in these immu-

table decrees, the triumph of his country. They also proceeded from the absence of every personal consideration ; for this corrupting influence often sullies the love of liberty, by those anxieties, those fears, those furious impulses which degrade, by rendering it but too similar to the base passions arising from interest and vanity. The patriotism of Franklin was, as it ought to be, calm, like that of Socrates and of Phocion, whom the orators sold to the purposes of a faction, or paid by tyrants, accused of not loving their country enough.

France, during the progress of this war, had presented him with a spectacle worthy of interesting his prying genius.

He had beheld the opinions which had been condemned in the works of philosophers, adopted and established in manifestoes, a people tranquil amidst its ancient chains, intoxicated with the pleasure of breaking those of another hemisphere, republican principles openly professed under an arbitrary government, the rights of men violated by the laws, and by authority of the magistrates, but proved and established in books, political knowledge, worthy of the most enlightened age, and the wisest nation, shining amidst a crowd of absurd and barbarous institutions, a people applauding the maxims of liberty in the theatres, but yet obedient to the maxims of slavery, free in their sentiments, in their opinions, in their conversation, and appearing to behold, with extreme indifference, actions obliged to submit to the very laws which they despised.

It was easy for him to foresee, that a nation, already so worthy of liberty, would soon be able to reconquer it, and that the revolution of France, like that of America, was one of the events which human knowledge might subtract from the empire of reason, and of the passions *.

† On his arrival in France, Franklin announced himself as a philosopher, who, afflicted with the troubles of his country, and averting his eyes from so many objects of desolation, had come to Europe on purpose to find an asylum.

He at first lodged in a village at the gates of Paris, and on the road to Versailles. He soon after hired a house at Passy, in this retreat, he saw but little company, and remained constantly upon his guard.

He used to whisper, that the hatred of the English ministry constantly exposed him to the greatest dangers—and this idea alone rendered him more interesting.

Franklin never entered the metropolis, unless accompanied by a numerous train, among whom were many men of genius, who, although neglected or persecuted by their countrymen, nevertheless reflected a lustre upon this foreigner, whom they honoured with their esteem,

* Dr Franklin, while in France, said one day, in a public company, “ you perceive liberty establish herself, and flourish almost under your very eyes, I dare to predict that, by and by, you will be anxious to taste her blessings ” CONDORCET

† From Hellard d'Auberteul

Every thing about him announced that simplicity of manners, which the authors and philosophers of antiquity have so well described, and which unfortunately have perhaps never been so perfect as in their descriptions.

He had thrown away the wig which in England had concealed the baldness of his forehead; and banished all that useless parade of dress, which could only have placed him upon a level with the rest of his countrymen.

He exhibited, to the astonished multitude, a head worthy of the portrait of Gu do, who excelled in the portraits of old men, his body was straight and vigorous, and covered with the most simple drapery — His eyes were aided by a large pair of spectacles, and in his hand he held a white wand.

He spoke but little, he knew how to be unpolite, without being rude, and his pride seemed to be that of nature.

Such a personage was admirably calculated to excite the curiosity of Paris. The people all, wherever he intended to pass, they demanded of each other "Who is that aged peasant, with so noble an aspect?"—and replied, with emulation, "It is the celebrated Franklin!"

He repaired to all the places where men usually associate for amiable, or useful, or humane purposes, and his arrival was always announced with plaudits.

He was to be seen at the public meetings of the Academy of Sciences, and the French Academy, at the audiences of the Parliament, at the exhibition of
the

the pictures in the academy of painting and sculpture, at the free society of emulation for the encouragement to useful arts; and in those haunts, guarded with secrecy, where Peace and Liberty assembled, which had been frequented by Helvetius and Voltaire, and where he was worthy of presiding along with them.

Never was any man so much honoured, without exciting envy, for every time that his name happened to be quoted, it was always the custom to add, “ He “ is a most respectable gentleman ” In three months after his arrival at Paris, his portrait was engraved, and to be seen every-where

In the mean time, the cabinet of London could not be persuaded that France and Spain were about to interest themselves in favour of America. “ The “ French colonies,” said Lord George Germaine in the House of Commons, “ are perhaps still more “ discontented than our own —Is it then to be “ believed, that the Court of Versailles would dare “ to encourage a rebellion in their neighbourhood ? “ Will it not be afraid, lest its own islands, in the “ West-Indies, should be tempted to participate in “ the unlimited rights of liberty ?

“ Will not those of Spain find a commerce with all “ nations infinitely more advantageous than with the “ Biscay company, and the exclusive enjoyment of “ their own treasures, infinitely more agreeable, than, “ as now, to be obliged to dig their mines for an “ European monarch ?

“ The neighbourhood of a large independent state,
 “ would always afford a perpetual subject of uneasi-
 “ nefs to France and Spain , and these Courts can-
 “ not be so blind to their own proper interests, as to
 “ support America.”

After some preliminary propositions, Conrad Gerard, authorised by a special commission from the King of the French, dated Jan. 30th, 1778, and Benjamin Franklin, Silas Deane, and Arthur Lee, on the part of the Congress, signed at Paris, on the 6th of February following, a treaty of friendship and commerce between the Crown of France, and the United States of America. These plenipotentiaries, at the same time, insisted on obtaining an alliance offensive and defensive, by which Louis XVI. was to engage, not only purely and simply to recognise the independence of the United States, but also to guarantee and to defend them. This was refused by the French cabinet.

The King might readily acknowledge the independence of the colonies as an evident political fact, but he did not choose to make himself an umpire, he could not consequently either guarantee, or undertake a war, in order to support it.

Nevertheless, as the court of London appeared to have conceived a design of attacking France, the King thought proper to enter into an eventual, but purely defensive alliance with the commonwealth of America.

It

It was agreed, in consequence of this, *that if war should be declared between France and Great Britain, during the present hostilities between the United States and England*, his Most Christian Majesty and the United States should make a common cause of it, and mutually aid each other with their counsels and then forces, according to the necessity of circumstances, as is usual between good and faithful allies.

It was also declared, by article II. That the essential and direct object of the alliance was efficaciously to maintain the liberty, sovereignty, and absolute and unlimited independence of the United States, as well in what related to commerce, as government. In short, the King engaged, in case war should be declared between France and England, never to lay down his arms, until after the independence and the sovereignty of the United States of America should be recognised by Great Britain.

This alliance did not prevent the colonies from treating with England without the consent of France, as long as hostilities were confined to them, and it left the King and Parliament of Great Britain absolute masters of either peace or war.

It never acquired any reality, until the commencement of hostilities on the part of his Britannic Majesty, who ordered Pondicherry to be besieged, even before the treaty in question was concluded.

It remained, indeed, a profound secret, because, being provisional, it was then of no real value whatever, but the treaty of commerce was notified to the Court of London, by the Count de Noailles, Am-

Ambassador from France, on the 13th of March 1775

On that very evening, Lord North declared in Parliament, that he regarded a war with France as inevitable.

Dr. Franklin, at length, had an interview with his Most Christian Majesty, he was presented to him, in the gallery of Versailles, by the Count de Vergennes, Minister for foreign affairs. On this occasion, he was accompanied and followed by a great number of Americans, and individuals of foreign states, who were collected together by curiosity. His age, his venerable appearance, the simplicity of his dress on such an occasion, every thing that was either singular or respectable in the life of this American, contributed to augment the public attention. Clapping of hands, and a variety of other demonstrations of joy, announced that warmth of affection, of which the French are more susceptible than any other people, and of which their politeness and civility augments the charm to him who is the object of it.

His Majesty addressed him as follows :

“ You may assure the United States of America of my friendship, I beg leave also to observe, that I am exceedingly satisfied in particular with your own conduct, during your residence in my kingdom.” When the new Ambassador, after this audience, crossed the Court, in order to repair to the office of the minister of foreign affairs, the multitude waited for him in the passage, and hailed him with their acclamations.

At

At the moment that this illustrious philosopher was received in this manner in Europe, the spirit of division was introduced among the people of America. General Washington began to be reproached for never having come off victorious in any pitched battle he had fought. The Court of London had emissaries in its pay, who, with an appearance of zeal in the cause of America, endeavoured to ruin it, by fermenting the dissensions that took place between the chief persons in the legislature, and the leaders of the army. Some men, the secret enemies of France, endeavoured to inspire the people with distrust to government, and with a hatred to the individuals of the nation. Several adventurers, who pretended to be officers in the service of his Most Christian Majesty, had, by means of their disorderly and improper conduct, but too much favoured the prejudices conceived against their countrymen.

They also endeavoured to throw doubts upon the success of Dr. Franklin's mission, the Congress actually refused to employ some individuals selected from our best troops, they even expected but little trade with France, either on account of past experience in business, or some other reasons not easily specified, for, in a country, of which commerce is the life, and which holds up as the first class of citizens, all those that practise it with success, frankness and good faith form the basis of negotiations; whereas, among those nations in which commerce does not attract the public attention, the merchant

necessarily becomes a man full of tricks, and despicable manoeuvres. The trade of monarchies is propagated with great difficulty throughout the world, whereas, on the contrary, in all ages, commerce has become tributary to republics, and even to those the soil of which affords them but little or nothing to exchange.

At length, the Court of England resolved to send Commissioners to America, provided with extensive powers, in order to offer peace to the colonies, and to re-establish an union on the same basis as it had existed in 1763.

The treaty with France had been concluded on the 6th of February, and the conciliatory bills did not pass the British Parliament until the 16th of the same month; but the ministry hoped, that if their Ambassadors set off instantly, they would arrive in sufficient time to divide the sentiments of the people, and even to prevent the Congress from ratifying the engagement entered into at Paris with its Plenipotentiaries Lord Carlisle, a man of gentle manners, and some parts; Mr. (afterwards Commodore) Johnstone, formerly Governor of Florida, who was beloved in America on account of his candour, his knowledge, and his humanity, and William Eden, a man of considerable capacity; were entrusted with this delicate mission. Several of the English had actually persuaded themselves that the Congress usurped the authority which they exercised over the people, and knowing that the declaration of Independence had not passed by an unanimous vote, they
thought

thought that it would be easy to gain over a sufficient number of the members of the Assembly, in order to procure a majority.

The cabinet of St. James's had also sent its emissaries to Paris, to treat with Dr. Franklin, and endeavour either to deceive, or betray him.

But it was now too late to open a negotiation, for Silas Deane had left the capital of France, in order to embark at Toulon on board the fleet commanded by Count d'Estaing, and M. Gerard was to proceed to America, on the same occasion, in quality of Minister Plenipotentiary.

The Court of London, notwithstanding these conciliatory bills, did not recall its armies, on the contrary, it included Lord and General Howe among the Commissioners, and there was every reason to believe, that neither the King, nor his ministers, ever seriously intended to negotiate fairly with the Americans, but wished merely to engage them to break the treaty which they had concluded with France, and to gain over some of the members of the Congress to their views. Perhaps they resolved first, if possible, to make them lose their new allies, and then to reduce them to the vilest slavery.

After having achieved his great work, a peace, which gave liberty and independence to his country, Dr Franklin led rather a solitary life during his retreat at Passy. A small circle of society, a few friends, and business that required but little labour ;
these

these furnished occupations for the evening of a serene life. But a grievous infirmity at length troubled his happiness, from that moment, his inclinations were turned towards America, and he accordingly departed from France, to which, by way of recompense for its services, he left a good example, and lessons that could not remain lost without their proper use. Soon after his arrival in the Isle of Wight, he embarked, once more, for his native country, he was accompanied to Great Britain by M le Veillard, who, during his residence at Passy, had constantly exhibited towards him a degree of attention and respect, which filial affection could alone rival. The American philosopher hardly touched English ground with his feet, for he had the generosity to spare, to his humbled enemies, the mortification of beholding his glory. If, on one hand, he beheld the French as friends, the English appeared, on the other, to be relations, in regard to whom he ought to respect the ties of nature, even although their own injustice had violated them.

His entry into Philadelphia resembled a triumph; and he traversed the streets of that capital, amidst the benedictions of a free and grateful people, who had not forgotten his services.

The warriors, who had shed their blood for an independence, insured by means of his sagacity, were eager to exhibit to him their glorious wounds. He was surrounded by old men, who had petitioned Heaven to live long enough in order to behold his return, and by a new generation, eager to survey the fea-

tures of a great man, whose talents, whose services, and whose virtues, had excited in their hearts the first raptures of enthusiasm. Having advanced from a port henceforth open to all nations, to a city, the model of all future capitals, he beheld the public school which he had founded, in a state of splendour; and saw the hospital, the establishment of which had been one of his first services, and the increase of which was owing to his foresight, now fully commensurate to all his wishes, by solacing suffering humanity, and by aiding the progress of reason. He then turned his eyes towards the neighbouring country, embellished by liberty, in which, in the midst of public prosperity, were still to be seen some vestiges of the ravages of the English, but these only added, by their contrast, to endear, still more, the pleasures arising from peace and victory.

* CHARACTER OF DR. FRANKLIN.

Humanity and frankness were the basis of his morality. A habitual gaiety, a happy facility in regard to every thing respecting the common concerns of life, and a tranquil inflexibility in affairs of importance, formed the character of Dr Franklin — These two latter qualities are easily united in men, who, endowed with a superior mind, and strong understanding, abandon trifling things to doubt and to indifference.

His system of conduct was simple, he endeavoured to banish sorrow and wearisomeness, by means of

* By M. Condorcet

temperance and labour. "Happiness," he was used to say, "like a body, is composed of insensible elements"

Without disdainning glory, he knew how to despise the injustice of opinion, and while enjoying renown, he could pardon envy.

During his youth, he had carried his *pyrrhonism* to the very foundations of morality, the natural goodness of his heart, and the directions of his conscience, were his sole guides, and they very rarely led him astray.

A little later in life, he allowed that there existed a morality founded upon the nature of man, independent of all speculative opinions, and anterior to all conventions

He thought, that our souls, in another life, received the recompense of their virtues, and the punishment of their faults, he believed in the existence of a God, at once beneficent and just, to whom he offered up, in the secrecy of his own conscience, a silent, but pure homage

He did not despise the exterior forms of religion; he even thought them useful to morality, he, however, submitted himself to them but seldom.

All religions appeared to him to be equally good, provided an universal toleration was the principle of them, and that they did not deprive, of the recompense due to virtue, those who were of another belief, or of no belief at all.

The application of the sciences to the common purposes of life, and to domestic œconomy, was
often

often the subject of his researches; he took pleasure to demonstrate, that, even in the most common affairs of life, custom and ignorance are but bad guides; that we were far from having exhausted the resources of nature, and were only deficient in men capable of interrogating her *.

He never wrote any thing upon politics, except some tracts required by circumstances, and produced upon the spur of the occasion.

It was easy to perceive, that he always endeavoured to reduce all questions to their simple elements, and to present them in such a manner to the public, that the unlearned might be enabled to understand, and to resolve them. It was to such that he always addressed himself. Sometimes it was an error that he attempted to root out and destroy, and sometimes an useful truth, for which he wished gently to prepare their minds, that at length they might be enabled to receive, and, above all, to preserve it. It is in vain that we shall search for any subject, on which he could be supposed to have written from the mere impulse of glory.

* He was occupied a long time, in endeavouring to make the forms of chimnies more perfect, and to introduce œconomy in regard to combustible substances, by regulating the intensity and the equality of heat, and the renewal of the air in places warmed artificially. Several years before he became so celebrated as he afterwards was, and at the period when he began to enjoy an independent fortune, it was proposed to him to procure a patent for a stove of his own invention. This he rejected, saying, at the same time, “ I have profited by the inventions of others, and “ is it not just that they, in return, should profit by mine ?”

Sometimes

Sometimes he employed those forms, which, in appearance only, disguise the truth, in order to render it more affecting, and which, instead of disclosing, allow the pleasure of divining it.

It was thus that, while seeming to teach the surest means for diminishing the extent of a state, which is found too difficult to be governed, he lampooned the conduct of the English ministry in regard to America, thus, also, by way of displaying the injustice of the pretensions of Great Britain in regard to her colonies, he supposes the King of Prussia to publish a proclamation, in which he subjugates England to the payment of certain taxes, under pretext that the inhabitants of the banks of the Oder had formerly conquered and peopled it.

His conversation, like his style, was always natural, and often ingenious. In his youth, he had read Xenophon as a tutor who had inspired him with a love for the Socratic method of argument,—and he took pleasure in employing it, sometimes by putting artificial questions, tending to make the advocates of a false opinion refute themselves, sometimes, by an application of their principles to other events, obliging them thus to recognise the truth, when disengaged from the clouds within which custom or prejudice had enveloped it, at other times, deciding by means of an apologue, a tale, or an anecdote, those questions which the pride of a serious discussion would have obscured.

Being employed by some of the American provinces, to request an abolition of the insulting custom
of

of transporting malefactors to the colonies, the minister, by way of reply, alleged the necessity of delivering England of such vermin.

“What would you say to us,” rejoined he, “if we were to export our rattlesnakes?”

Dr. Franklin had never formed a general system of politics. He examined the questions exactly as the events presented themselves to his observation, or as his foresight anticipated them; and he decided them all according to the standard of those principles which originate in a virtuous mind, and in a judgment at once just and comprehensive.

In general, he appeared not fond of giving all at once the greatest possible degree of perfection to human institutions, he thought it a more certain way to wait for the effects of time. He was not fond of attacking abuses in front, he thought it more prudent first to attack those errors which are the source of them.

He had in politics, as in morals, that kind of indulgence which requires but little, because it hopes much, and which forgets, and even pardons the present, in favour of the future. He always proposed those measures which seemed to him to be most proper in order to preserve peace, because he was not fond of delivering up the happiness of mankind to the uncertainty of events, nor truth to the interest of a party.

He preferred the good obtained by it which might be expected from enth

it is more easy to be procured, and infinitely more lasting

In one word, his politics were those of a man who believed in the power of reason and the reality of virtue, and who aspired to be the teacher of his fellow-citizens before he became their legislator.

* At the name of Franklin, every thing interesting to virtue, freedom, and human ty, rises to our recollection¹ By what eulogium shall we do justice to his pre-eminent abilities and worth² This would require a pre-eminence of abilities and worth like his own.

His original and universal genius was capable of the *greatest* things, but disdained not the *smallest*, provided they were useful With equal ease and abilities he could conduct the affairs of a printing-press, and of a great nation, and discharge the duties of a public minister of state, or the private executor of a will.

Franklin, as a philosopher, might have become a Newton, as a lawgiver, a Lycurgus, but he was greater than either of them, by uniting the talents of both in the practical philosophy of doing good, compared to which all the palms of speculative wisdom and science wither on the sight. He did not seek to derive his

¹ See Dr Smith's Eulogium on Benjamin Franklin, delivered March 1, 1791, before the Congress, Philosophical Society of Philadelphia

eminence from the mere profession of letters, which, although laborious, seldom elevates a man to any high rank in the public confidence and esteem, but he became great by applying his abilities to things useful, and accommodating his instructions to the exigencies of the times, and the necessities of his country.

Had we no other proof of this, the great and dignified part which he sustained in the American Revolution, one of the most important events recorded in the annals of mankind, would have been alone sufficient to immortalize his name, but when we take into the account his previous labours for half a century, on purpose to illuminate the minds of his fellow-citizens, to prepare them for the mighty event, to nurse them into greatness by the arts of industry and virtue, to shew them the happiness which lay within their reach, to teach them to dare, and to bear, and to improve success;—this accumulation of services has woven for his head a diadem of such beauty, as scarcely ever adorned the brow of either ancient or modern worthy.

In the earliest stages of life he had conceived the mighty idea of American glory and empire, but, like Hercules in the cradle, he was ignorant of his own strength, and had not conceived the achievements and the labours that awaited him. He had not yet conceived that he was one day to contend with kings and potentates for the rights of his country, to extort from them an acknowledgment of its sovereignty, and to subscribe with his name the

sacred instruments which were to give it a pre-eminent rank among the nations of the earth, and to assure its liberty and independence to the latest ages!

Virtus vera nobilitas *, was an adage with which he was well pleased. He considered a descent from any of the virtuous peasantry and venerable yeomanry of America, who first subdued the sturdy oaks of our forests, and assisted to introduce culture and civilization into a once untutored land, as having more true nobility in it, than a pedigree which might be traced through the longest line of those commonly called great and noble in this world. He rose from low beginnings, and advanced not only himself but his country by means of the press. The press was the great instrument he made use of in order to draw the attention of Pennsylvania to habits of virtue and industry, to the institution of societies for the promotion of agriculture, commerce, and the mechanic arts, to the founding of schools, libraries, and hospitals, for the diffusion of useful knowledge and the advancement of humanity. When you consider this, you will go and do likewise †; you will, with professional joy and pride, observe, that from the torch which Franklin kindled by means of his press, in the new world, “ sparks are already stolen
“ which are lighting up the sacred flame of liberty,
“ virtue, and wisdom, over the entire face of the

* Virtue is true nobility

† This part was addressed to the printers of Philadelphia, who attended in a body.

globe ” Be it your part to feed that torch by means of the press until its divine flame reach the skies

For the purpose of aiding his press, and increasing the materials of information, one of the first societies in America was formed by Dr Franklin in the year 1728, about the twenty-second year of his age, and was called the Junto. The number was limited to twelve members, who were bound together in all the ties of friendship, and engaged to assist each other not only in mutual communications of knowledge, but in all their worldly undertakings. This society, after having subsisted forty years, and having contributed to the formation of some very great men, besides Dr Franklin himself, became at last the foundation of the *American Philosophical Society*, now assembled to pay the debt of gratitude to his memory. Many of the questions discussed by the members are curious; the following are a few of them :

“ Is sound an entity or a body ? ”

“ How may the phænomena of vapours be explained ? ”

“ Is self-interest (the rudder that steers mankind) the universal monarch to whom all are tributaries ? ”

“ Which is the best form of government, and what was that form which first prevailed among mankind ? ”

“ What is the reason that the tides rise higher in the bay of Fundy, than in the bay of Delaware ? ”

- “ Is the emission of paper money safe ? ”
- “ What is the reason that men of the greatest
“ knowledge are not the most happy ? ”
- “ How may the possession of the lakes be improved
“ to our advantage ? ”
- “ Why are tumultuous, uneasy sensations united
“ with our desires ? ”
- “ Whether it ought to be the aim of philosophy
“ to eradicate the passions ? ”
- “ How may smoky chimnies be best cured ? ”
- “ Why does the flame of a candle tend upwards
“ in a spire ? ”
- “ Which is the least criminal, A *bad* action joined
“ with a *good* intention, or a *good* action with
“ a *bad* intention ? ”
- “ Is it consistent with the principles of liberty in a
“ free government to punish a man as a libeller
“ when he speaks the truth ? ” &c. &c.

But Dr Franklin did not rest satisfied with the institution of this literary club, for the improvement of himself and a few of his select friends. He proceeded year after year in the projecting and establishing other institutions for the benefit of the community at large. Thus, in 1731, he set on foot the “ Library Company of the city of Philadelphia,” a most important institution to all ranks of people, giving them access, at a small expence, to books on every useful subject, amounting in the whole to near ten thousand volumes, and the number is daily increasing.

After

After the establishment of this company, its founder still proceeded to promote other establishments and associations, such as fire companies, the nightly watch for the city of Philadelphia, a plan for cleansing, lighting, and ornamenting the streets, and an association for insuring houses damaged by fire, to which, as collateral, he soon after added his plan for improving chimnies and fire-places, which gave rise to the open stoves now in general use, to the comfort of thousands who assemble round them in the wintry nights, and bless the inventor's name which they yet bear.

The next institution, in the foundation of which he was the principal agent, was the Academy and Charitable School of the city of Philadelphia, the plan of which he drew up and published in the year 1749.

The Pennsylvania Hospital is also a monument of his philanthropy and public spirit, for the establishment and endowment of which he was happily instrumental in obtaining a legislative sanction and grant, by his great influence in the General Assembly in the year 1752.

These various institutions, which do so much honour to Pennsylvania, he projected, and saw completed during the first twenty years of his residence in this state.

A life so assiduously employed in devising and executing schemes for the public good could not fail to aid him in his political career. He first became

clerk of the General Assembly, and then a member of the same for the city of Philadelphia, during the space of fourteen years successively. In 1744, a Spanish privateer having entered the bay of Delaware, ascended as high as Newcastle, to the great terror of the citizens of Philadelphia. On the occasion of this alarm he wrote his first political pamphlet, called "Plain Truth," to exhort his fellow-citizens to the bearing of arms, which laid the foundation of those military associations which followed at different times for the defence of the country.

Endowed with a penetrating and inquisitive genius, speculative and philosophical subjects engaged his early attention, but he loved them only as they were useful, and pursued them no farther than as he found his researches applicable to some substantial purpose in life. His stock of knowledge, and the fruits of his investigations, he never hoarded up for his own private use; whatever he discovered, whatever he considered as beneficial to mankind, fresh as it was conceived, or brought forth in his own mind, he communicated to his fellow-citizens by means of his newspapers, and almanacks, in delicate and palatable morsels for the advancement of industry, frugality, and other republican virtues, and at a future day, as occasion might require, he would collect and digest the parts, and set out the whole into one rich feast of useful maxims and practical wisdom. Of this kind is his celebrated address, entitled, "The Way to Wealth," which is a collection, or a digest, of the various sentences, proverbs, and wise maxims,
 * which,

which, during a course of many years, he had occasionally published in his "Poor Richard's Almanack," on topics of industry, frugality, and the duty of *minding o' e's own business*. Had he never written any thing more than this admirable address, it would have insured him immortality, he, besides this, published "The Farmer's Philosopher," "The Rural Sage," and "The Yeoman's and Peasant's Oracle"

But greater things lay before him, although, as a philosopher as well as a politician, he remained unconscious of the plenitude of his own strength and talents, until called into further exertions by the magnitude of future objects and occasions.

From the beginning of the year 1746, till about twenty years afterwards, was the æra of electricity; no other branch of natural philosophy was so much cultivated during that period. In America and in the mind of Franklin it found a rich bed, the seed took root, and sprung into a great tree, before he knew that similar seeds had vegetated, or risen to any height in other parts of the world.

Anterior to that period philosophers amused themselves only with the smaller phænomena of electricity; such as relate to the attraction of light bodies, the distances to which such attraction would extend, the luminous appearance produced by the excited glass tube, and the firing spirits and inflammable air by electricity.

Little more was known on this subject than Thales, the Milesian, had discovered 2000 years before. Sufficient *data* and experiments were wanting to
reduce

reduce the doctrine and phænomena of electricity into any rules or system, and to apply them to any beneficial purposes of life. This great achievement, which had eluded the industry and abilities of a Boyle and a Newton, was reserved for a Franklin.

What must have been his ideas on the success of his grand experiment by means of his *electrical kite*? Similar must his raptures have been to those of a Newton, when, by applying the laws of *gravitation* and *projection* first to the moon, he was enabled to extend them to the whole solar system, as is beautifully described by the poet :

“ What were his raptures then ! how fine ! how strong
 “ And what the triumphs of old Greece and Rome
 “ With this compar’d—When Nature and her laws
 “ Stood all subdu’d by him, and open laid
 “ Then every latent glory to his view ”

His inquiries and discoveries were confined to no limits or subjects. Through all the elements, in the fire and in the water, in the air and in the earth, he sought for, and he found, new and beneficial knowledge.

Being on ship-board in the year 1757, an accident gave him occasion to observe the wonderful effect of oil in stilling the waves of the sea. He immediately determined to elucidate this new property of oil, which he did with success, and the philosophical world is indebted to him for being now fully acquainted with a fact which, although not unknown to Plutarch and Pliny, could, for ages past, have

been

been known only among the Dutch fishermen, and a few seamen of other nations

He discovered that unaccountable agitation of the two surfaces in *contact*, when a quantity of *oil* floats on water in a vessel.

He found the pulse glass in Germany, and introduced it into England with improvements of his own.

He discovered that equal and congenial bodies, acquired different degrees of heat from the sun's rays, according to their different colours

He made experiments to shew that boats are drawn with more difficulty in small canals than in greater bodies of water.

He made and published experiments for improving the art of *swimming*, and for allaying thirst by bathing in sea water.

He published observations on the gradual progress of north-east storms along the American coasts contrary to the direction of the wind; and likewise to ascertain the course, velocity, and temperature, of the *gulf-stream*, for the benefit of navigation.

He continued experiments, and recommended them to the late Dr Ingenhouz, for determining the relative powers of different metals for conducting heat.

He revived and improved the *Harmonica* or *Glasfichord*, and extended his speculations to the fine arts, shewing that he could taste and criticise even the compositions of a Handel!

He

He left behind him some very curious thoughts, and conjectures, concerning an universal fluid, the original formation of the earth, and how far, from attentive observations made during the summer, it may be possible to foretel the mildness or severity of the following winter.

And to conclude the whole One of the last public acts in which he was concerned, was to sanction with his name the memorial presented to the general government of the United States on the subject of the *Slave Trade*, by the “ Pennsylvania Society, “ for promoting the abolition of slavery, and the “ relief of the free negroes unlawfully held in bondage ” Of this society he was president, and the institution and the design of it could not but be congenial to the soul of a man, whose life and labours had been devoted to the cause of *Liberty* for more than half a century, ardently striving to extend its blessings to every part of the human species, and particularly to such of his fellow creatures as, being entitled to *freedom*, are nevertheless injuriously enslaved, or detained in bondage by fraud or violence,

EULOGIUM ON DR. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN,

*Read before a Society in Paris, by MONSIEUR DE LA
ROCHEFOUCAULT, Deputy to the National Assembly,
on the thutteenth day of June 1789.*

GENTLEMEN,

WHEN this society was instituted, you placed in the list of its members two names illustrious in the annals of liberty, those of Washington and Franklin; and already one of them is no more! Franklin died in the month of April, after sixteen days illness, and his memory has received the highest honours that were ever paid to man, as they were the homage of a free people. All America has wept for him, and the National Assembly of France, by the distinguished act of putting itself into mourning, tells the world that a great man belongs equally to every country.

Honoured with the friendship of this respectable man, for whom I entertained profound veneration, permit me to call your attention to him for a few moments.

Benjamin Franklin, born at Boston in the year of our Lord 1706, was placed at a very early age under one of his brothers, who was a printer, and with whom he made a rapid progress in a trade so useful to mankind, indeed he acquired an attachment for it which continued as long as he lived. During his residence at Passy, so celebrated by being the place of his retreat
while

while in France, he frequently invited Messieurs Didot, Pierres, and other distinguished artists of the capital to visit him, and contributed, by his penetrating and inventive genius, to the advancement of a science to which he had ever been fondly attached.

Scarcely emerged from infancy, young Franklin, a journeyman printer, was a philosopher without being conscious of it, and by the continual exercise of his genius, prepared himself for those great discoveries which in science have associated his name with that of Newton, and for those political reflections which have placed him by the side of Solon and Lycurgus.

Ill-treated by his brother, he left Boston, and procured employment first in a printing-office at New-York, and afterwards at Philadelphia, where he settled.

America was not then what it is now. Agriculture and a few of the ruder arts almost exclusively occupied the unpolished people by whom it was inhabited. The religious fanaticism which had conducted thither the first English emigrants, left traces that sometimes disturbed its tranquillity, particularly in the northern provinces, and confined the education of the inhabitants to a narrow circle, of which superstition was frequently the centre.

Pennsylvania, however, whose legislator, although a fanatic *, cherished liberty, was in this respect more happily situated for the reception of improvement.

* This term is surely improper when applied to William Penn.

Soon after his arrival in this province, Franklin, in concert with some other young men, established a small club, where every member brought his stock of ideas, which were submitted to discussion. This society, of which the young printer was the soul, has been the source of many useful establishments, calculated to promote the progress of science, the mechanical arts, and particularly the improvement of the human understanding.

A newspaper that issued from his press was the means he employed to draw the attention of his countrymen. There he hazarded anonymous proposals, at first loose, but afterwards more precise and definitive, and he set on foot subscriptions which were the more readily filled, as every subscriber might consider himself as the head of an undertaking, the author of which was not named.

It was in this manner that public libraries were founded, that seminaries of education, since become celebrated colleges, arose, it was in this manner that the philosophical society of Philadelphia, no contemptible rival of the academies of Europe, was formed, that associations for ornamenting, cleansing, and lighting the streets of that city, and for preventing fires, were established, and that commercial societies, and even military bodies for the defence of the country, were incorporated. Nothing was foreign to the genius of Franklin; and his name, which his modesty endeavoured to conceal, was always placed by his countrymen in the lists, and frequently at the head

head of those different societies, the members of which were desirous of retaining him as their honorary chief. But higher avocations called him from his country, which he was destined to serve more effectually as its agent in the metropolis of England.

He was sent thither in the year 1757. Celebrated for his astonishing discoveries respecting the nature, effects, and identity, of thunder and electricity, and the means of guarding against their ravages, his fame had arrived before him. The letters by which he had announced these discoveries remained for a long time unnoticed by the Royal Society of London, but they were at length published, and all the learned of Europe were informed, that in the new world existed a philosopher who was worthy of their admiration.

The stamp act, by which the British Minister wished to familiarise the Americans to pay taxes to the mother country, revived that love of liberty which had led their forefathers to a country at that time a desert, and the colonies formed a Congress, the first idea of which had been communicated to them by Franklin. at the conferences at Albany in the year 1754. The war that was just terminated, and the exertions made by them to support it, had given them a conviction of their own strength, they accordingly opposed this odious measure, and the Minister gave way, but reserved the means of renewing his attempts. Once cautioned, however, they remained on their guard, liberty, cherished by these alarms, took deep root, a salutary fermentation agitated their minds,
and

and prepared for the revolution, men, whose names it has rendered justly celebrated. Among these were Hancock, Samuel and John Adams, the sage Jefferson*, Jay, Green, and the great Washington; and they were not a little obliged for the rapid circulation of ideas to newspapers, for the introduction of which they were indebted to the printer of Philadelphia. In the year 1766, this printer, called to the bar of the House of Commons of Great Britain, underwent that famous interrogatory which placed the name of Franklin as high in politics, as it was before in natural philosophy.

From that time he defended the cause of America with a firmness and moderation becoming a great man, pointing out to ministry all the errors they had committed, and the consequences they would produce, until the period when, the tax on tea meeting the same opposition as the stamp act had done, England blindly fancied herself capable of subjecting by force three millions of men determined to be free, at a distance of two thousand leagues from her territories.

Every man is well acquainted with the particulars of that war, its fortunate result to the whole universe,

* Mr Jefferson was afterwards minister plenipotentiary from the United States to the court of France, where he succeeded Franklin. It was he who framed the act of independence of the United States, and the act passed in Virginia for establishing religious liberty. America has lately recalled him from France, where he is truly regretted, to confer on him the office of Secretary of State for foreign affairs.

the part taken in it by France under a King who, protector of the liberties of America, has since meritoriously obtained from the French nation the title of restorer of the liberty of his own country ; and the brilliant services of that youth whose name, gloriously connected with that revolution, has acquired fresh lustre in a revolution infinitely more great.

Having asserted their independence, and placed themselves in the rank of nations, the different colonies, now the United States of America, adopted each its own form of government, and retaining almost universally their admiration for the British Constitution, framed them from the same principles variously modelled.

Franklin alone, disengaging the political machine from those multiplied movements and admired counterpoises that rendered it so complicated, proposed the reducing it to the simplicity of a single legislative body. This grand idea startled the legislators of Pennsylvania ; but the philosopher removed the fears of a considerable number, and at length determined the whole to adopt a principle which the National Assembly has made the basis of the French constitution*.

After

* The usual progress of the human mind leads man from the complex to the simple. Observe the works of the first mechanics overloaded with numerous pieces, some of which embarrass, and others diminish their effect. It has been the same with legislators, both speculative and practical, struck with an abuse, they have endeavoured

After having given laws to his country, Franklin determined to visit Europe once more, in order to serve it, not by representations to the mother-country, or answers at the bar of the House of Commons, but by treaties with France, and successively with other states, which, though governed by monarchs

deavoured to correct it by institutions that have been productive of still greater abuses. In political œconomy the unity of the legislative body is the *maximum* of simplicity. Franklin was the first who dared to put this idea in practice. The respect the Pennsylvanians entertained for him induced them to adopt it, but the other states were terrified at it, and even the constitution of Pennsylvania has since been altered. In Europe this opinion has been more successful. When I had the honour to present to Franklin the translations of the constitutions of America, the minds of people on this side the Atlantic were scarcely better disposed toward it than those on the other side, and if we except Dr Price in England, and Turgot and Condorcet in France, no man who applied himself to politics agreed in opinion with the American philosopher. I will venture to assert that I was of the small number of those who were struck with the beauty of the simple plan he traced, and that I saw no reason to change my opinion when the National Assembly, led by the voice of those deep-thinking and eloquent orators who discussed that important question, established it as a principle of the French Constitution, that legislation should be confided to a single body of representatives. It will not perhaps be deemed unpardonable to have once mentioned myself, at a time when the honour I have of holding a public character makes it my duty to give an account of my sentiments to my fellow-citizens. France will not relapse into a more complex system, but will assuredly acquire the glory of maintaining that which she has established, and give it a degree of perfection which, by rendering a great nation happy, will attract the eyes and the applauses of all Europe, and of the whole world.

or despots, listened to the voice of an American speaking liberty.

Some years previous to this I became acquainted with him during a journey I made to London, and permit me, Gentlemen, to recall to my mind the happiness I felt when, on his arrival at Paris, I conducted to his house Monsieur Turgot, then ex-minister, and saw those two excellent men, both so deserving of the admiration and regret of mankind, embrace for the first time. Franklin at least completed a long career; but Turgot, taken from the world at the age of fifty-four, saw not his country restored to freedom. It was he who wrote under the portrait of Franklin that beautiful verse,

Exiit ex'o fulmen, mox sceptrum tyrannis,

the last hemistich of which was a prophecy that was speedily accomplished.

The vicissitudes of fortune experienced by the Americans sometimes gave considerable anxiety to their illustrious negotiator, but his great mind, encouraged by the bravery of his countrymen, by the firmness of the Congress, and, above all, by the genius, talents, and virtues, of the immortal Washington, did not give way to fear. He did not, however, flatter himself that peace would so soon finish the course of that happy revolution; and when I embraced him, the day on which he had signed the articles, "My friend," said he to me with an air of perfect

perfect satisfaction, “ could I have hoped at my age
“ to have enjoyed such a happiness?”

Whatever attractions an abode in France had for him, whatever pleasure he tasted in the society of the friends he had made, however great was the danger of so long a voyage to an old man of seventy-nine years of age, tormented with the stone, it was now necessary for him to revisit his country. He set off in the year 1785, and his return to America, at length become free, was a triumph of which antiquity cannot furnish us with any example.

He lived five years after this period. For three years he was president of the General Assembly of Pennsylvania; he was a member of the convention that established the new form of federal government, and his last public act afforded a grand example for those who are employed in the legislation of their country. In this convention he had differed in some points from the majority; but when the articles were ultimately decreed, he said to his colleagues, “ We ought
“ to have but one opinion, the good of our country
“ requires that our resolutions be unanimous ”

His almost continual sufferings for the two last years of his life had neither altered his temper nor his disposition, and to the last moment he retained the use of all his faculties. His will, which he made during his residence here, and which has just been opened, begins with a compliment to his profession. Even on his death-bed he did homage to typography, and the same sentiment induced him to instruct his

grand-son, Benjamin Beach, in this art, who, proud of the lessons of his illustrious master, is now a printer in Philadelphia.

He never wrote a work of any length. Almost every thing published by him on subjects of natural philosophy consists of letters to Mr. Collinson of the Royal Society of London, and to some other men of learning in Europe; they have been translated into French by Monsieur Barbeau du Bourg, but perhaps a new version hath become necessary. His political works, many of which are not known in France, consist of letters or short tracts, but all of them, even those of humour, bear the marks of his observing genius and mild philosophy. He wrote many things for that rank and description of people who have no opportunity for study, and whom it is of so much consequence to instruct; and he was well skilled in reducing useful truths to maxims easily retained, and sometimes to proverbs or little tales, the simple or the natural graces of which acquire a new value when associated with the name of their author.

The most voluminous of his works is the history of his own life, which he commenced for the use of his son, and for the continuation of which we are indebted to the ardent solicitations of Monsieur le Veillard, one of his most intimate friends. It employed his leisure hours during the latter part of his life, but the bad state of his health, and his excruciating pains, which gave him little respite, frequently interrupted his work; and the two copies, one of which was
sent

sent by him to London to Dr Price and Mr. Vaughan, and the other to Monsieur le Veillard and me, reach no farther than the year 1757. He speaks of himself as he would have done of another person, delineating his thoughts, his actions, and even his errors and faults; and he describes the unfolding of his genius and talents with the simplicity of a great man who knows how to do justice to himself, and with the testimony of a clear conscience void of reproach and “of offence towards God and towards man.”

In fact, Gentlemen, the whole life of Franklin, his meditations, his labours, have all been directed to public utility, but the grand object that he had always in view did not shut his heart against society. He loved his family and his friends; he was beneficent, the charms of his conversation were inexpressible; he spoke little, but he did not refuse to speak, and his communications were always interesting, and always instructive. In the midst of his occupations for the liberty of his country, he had always some curious experiment near him in his closet, and the sciences, which he had rather discovered than studied, afforded him a continual source of pleasure.

His memoirs, Gentlemen, will be published as soon as we receive from America the additions he may have made to the manuscript in our possession, and we then intend to give a complete collection of his works.

His name will be celebrated among the different associations of politics and of literature. Innumerable eulogies will be written or pronounced upon him, and you doubtless expect with impatience that of the virtuous orator *, the organ of the Academy of Sciences, in which the most honourable praise will be bestowed by him who best knew how to appreciate the worth of Franklin. The eulogium to which I allude, is to forerun the award of history, which will place this illustrious name among the most eminent benefactors of his species; which will trace the incidents of his life, pourtray the anguish of his fellow-citizens at his death, who believed that in him they lost a father and a friend, and which, after recounting the honours that America had consecrated to his memory, will also register in its calendar the splendid homage which the National Assembly has just paid, as an incident equally honourable to the people who thus displayed their love of virtue, and to the man who thus merited this mark of their attention.

As soon as the above eulogium was concluded, M de Liancourt made a motion, that the members of the society should wear the mourning decreed by the National Assembly, and that the bust of Franklin should be placed in their hall, with the following inscription :

* M. de Condorcet.

“ In

“ In testimony of the homage rendered by the unanimous vote of the society of the year 1789, to Benjamin Franklin, admired and regretted by all the friends of liberty.”

The motion was carried unanimously. M. de la Rochefoucault then presented to the society a bust of Benjamin Franklin, and the society voted him their thanks

OBSERVATIONS on the generally prevailing Doctrines of Life and Death · In a Letter from Dr. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN to M. DUBOURG, the French Translator of his Works.

DEAR SIR,

YOUR observations on the causes of death, and the experiments which you propose for recalling to life those who appear to be killed by lightning, demonstrate equally your sagacity and your humanity. It appears that the doctrines of life and death, in general, are yet but little understood.

A toad buried in sand will live, it is said, till the sand becomes petrified ; and then, being inclosed in the stone, it may still live for we know not how many years or ages. The facts which are cited in support of this opinion are too numerous and too circumstantial not to deserve a certain degree of credit.

dit. As we are accustomed to see all the animals with which we are acquainted eat and drink, it appears to us difficult to conceive how a toad can be supported in such a dungeon, but if we reflect that the necessity of nourishment, which animals experience in their ordinary state, proceeds from the continual waste of their substance by perspiration, it will appear less incredible that some animals in a torpid state, perspiring less because they use no exercise, should have less need of aliment, and that others, who are covered with scales or shells, which stop perspiration, such as land and sea turtles, serpents, and every species of fish, should be able to subsist a considerable time without any nourishment whatever. A plant, with its flowers, fades and dies immediately if exposed to the air without having its root immersed in an humid soil, from which it may draw a sufficient quantity of moisture to supply that which exhales from its substance, and is carried off continually by the air. Perhaps, however, if it were buried in quicksilver, it might preserve for a considerable space of time its vegetable life, its smell, and colour. If this be the case, it might prove a commodious method of transporting from distant countries those delicate plants which are unable to sustain the inclemency of the weather at sea, and which require particular care and attention.

I have seen an instance of common flies preserved in a manner somewhat similar. They had been drowned in Madeira wine apparently about the time
when

when it was bottled in Virginia to be sent to London. At the opening of one of the bottles, at the house of a friend where I then was, three drowned flies fell into the first glass that was filled. Having heard it remarked that drowned flies were capable of being revived by the rays of the sun, I proposed making the experiment upon these: They were, therefore, exposed to the sun upon a sieve, which had been employed to strain them out of the wine. In less than three hours two of them began by degrees to recover life. This commenced by some convulsive motions in the thighs, and at length they raised themselves upon their legs, wiped their eyes with their fore-feet, beat and brushed their wings with their hind-feet, and soon after began to fly, finding themselves in old England without knowing how they came thither. The third continued lifeless till sun-set, when, losing all hopes of him, he was thrown away.

I wish it were possible, from this instance, to invent a method of embalming drowned persons, in such a manner that they might be recalled to life at any period however distant, for, having a very ardent desire to see and observe the state of America an hundred years hence, I should prefer to an ordinary death, the being immersed in a cask of Madeira wine with a few friends till that time, to be then recalled to life by the solar warmth of my dear country. But since, in all probability, we live in an age too early, and too near the infancy of science, to hope
to

to see such an art brought in our time to perfection, I must, for the present, content myself with the treat which you are so kind as to promise me of the resurrection of a fowl or a turkey-cock.

I am, dear Sir,

Your sincere friend,

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

LETTER from Dr. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN to BENJAMIN VAUGHAN, ESQ., on the Criminal Laws, and the Practice of Privateering.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

March 14, 1785.

AMONG the pamphlets you lately sent me was one entitled, "Thoughts on Executive Justice." In return for that I send you a French one on the same subject, entitled, "Observations concernant l'Exécution de l'Article II. de la Declaration sur le Vol." They are both addressed to the judges, but written, as you will see, in a very different spirit. The English author is for hanging all thieves, the Frenchman is for proportioning punishments to offences.

If we really believe, as we profess to believe, that the law of Moses is the law of God, and the dictates of divine wisdom infinitely superior to human, on what principles do we ordain death as the punishment of an offence which, according to that law,

was

was only to be punished by a restitution of fourfold ? To put a man to death for a crime which does not deserve death, is it not a murder ? And as the French writer says, “ *Doit-on punir un délit contre la société par un crime contre la nature ?* ”

Superfluous property is the creature of society. Simple and mild laws were sufficient to guard the property that was merely necessary. The savage's bow, his hatchet, and his coat of skins, were sufficiently secured, without law, by the fear of personal resentment and retaliation. When, by virtue of the first laws, part of the society accumulated wealth and grew powerful, they enacted others more severe, and would protect their property at the expence of humanity. This was abusing their power, and commencing a tyranny. If a savage, before he entered into society, had been told, “ Your neighbour by this means may become owner of an hundred deer, but if your brother, or your son, or yourself, having no deer of your own, and being hungry, should kill one, an infamous death must be the consequence,” he would probably have preferred his liberty, and his common right of killing any deer, to all the advantages of society that might be proposed to him.

That it is better an hundred guilty persons escape, than that one innocent person should suffer, is a maxim that has been long and generally approved, and never, that I know of, controverted. Even the sanguinary author of the “ *Thoughts, &c* ” agrees to it, observing, “ that the very thought of injured innocence, and much more that of suffering inno-

“ cence,

“ cence, must awaken all our tenderest and most
 “ compassionate feelings, and, at the same time,
 “ raise our highest indignation against the instru-
 “ ments of it. But,” he adds, “ there is no dan-
 “ ger of either from a strict adherence to the laws.”
 Really?—Is it then impossible to make an unjust law?
 And if the law itself be unjust, may it not be the
 very “ instrument ” which ought “ to raise the au-
 “ thor’s and every body’s highest indignation?” I see,
 in the last newspapers from London, that a woman
 is capitally convicted at the Old Bailey, for privately
 stealing out of a shop some gauze, value fourteen
 shillings and three-pence, and the punishment of an
 human creature for this offence is by death on a
 gibbet! Might not that woman, by her own labour
 and industry, have made the reparation ordained by
 God in paying fourfold? Is not all punishment in-
 flicted beyond the merit of the offence, so much
 punishment of innocence? In this light how vast is
 the annual quantity of not only injured but suffering
 innocence, in almost all the civilized states of
 Europe!

But it seems to have been thought that this kind
 of innocence may be punished by way of preventing
 crimes. I have read indeed of a cruel Turk in Bar-
 bary, who, whenever he bought a new Christian
 slave, ordered him immediately to be hung up by
 the heels, and to receive an hundred blows of a
 cudgel on the soles of his feet, that the severe sense
 of the punishment, and fear of incurring it there-
 after,

after, might prevent the faults that should merit it. Our author himself would hardly approve entirely of this Turk's conduct in the government of slaves, and yet he appears to recommend something like it for the government of English subjects.

He applauds the reply of Judge Burnet to the convicted horse stealer, who being asked what he had to say, why judgment of death should not be passed against him? and answering, that it was hard to hang a man for only stealing an horse, was told by the judge, "Man, thou art not to be hanged only for stealing a horse, but that horses may not be stolen."

But the man's answer, if candidly examined, will, I imagine, appear reasonable, as being founded upon the eternal principles of justice and equity, that punishments should be proportioned to offences, and the judge's reply brutal and unreasonable, though the writer "wishes all judges to carry it with them whenever they go the circuit, and to bear it in their minds, as containing a wise reason for all the penal statutes which they are called upon to put in execution. It at once illustrates (says he) the true grounds and reasons of all capital punishments whatsoever, namely, that every man's property, as well as his life, may be held sacred and inviolate."

Is there then no difference in value between property and life? If I think it right that the crime of murder should be punished with death, not only as

an equal punishment of the crime, but to prevent other murders, does it follow that I must approve of inflicting the same punishment for a little invasion on my property by theft ? If I am not myself so barbarous, so bloody-minded, and revengeful as to kill a fellow-creature for stealing from me fourteen shillings and three-pence, how can I approve of a law that does it ?

Montesquieu, who was himself a judge, endeavours to impress other maxims. He must have known what humane judges feel on such occasions, and what the effects of those feelings are, and so far from thinking that severe and excessive punishments prevent crimes, he asserts, as quoted by our French writer, that

“ *L'atrocité des loix en empêche l'exécution.*

“ *Lorsque la peine est sans mesure on est souvent obli-*

“ *gé de lui préférer l'impunité.*

“ *La cause de tous les relâchemens vient de l'impu-*

“ *mité des crimes, et non de la moderation des peines.*”

It is said by those who know Europe generally, that there are more thefts committed and punished annually in England, than in all the other nations put together. If this be so, there must be a cause or causes for such gross depravity in the common people. May not one be the deficiency of justice and morality in our national government, manifested in our oppressive conduct to subjects, and unjust wars on our neighbours ? View the long-persisted-in, un-
just,

just, monopolizing treatment of Ireland at length acknowledged.

View the plundering government exercised by our merchants in the Indies, the confiscating war made upon the American colonies, and, to say nothing of those upon France and Spain, view the late war upon Holland, which was seen by impartial Europe in no other light than that of a war of rapine and pillage, the hopes of an immense and easy prey being its only apparent and, probably, its true and real motive and encouragement.

Justice is as strictly due between neighbour nations, as between neighbour citizens. An highwayman is as much a robber when he plunders in a gang as when single; and a nation that makes an unjust war is only a great gang. After employing your people in robbing the Dutch, is it strange, that being put out of that employment by peace, they still continue robbing and plundering one another?

Privateering, as the French call it, or privateering, is the universal bent of the English nation, at home and abroad, wherever settled. No less than seven hundred privateers were, it is true, commissioned in the last war. These were fitted out by merchants to prey upon other merchants, who had never done them any injury. Is there any one of those privateering merchants in London, who were so ready to rob the merchants of Amsterdam, that would not as readily plunder another London merchant of the next street, if he could do it, with the same impunity? The

avidity, the *alien appetens*, is the same: It is the fear alone of the gallows that makes the difference.

How then can a nation, which, amongst the honestest of its people, has so many thieves by inclination, and whose government encouraged and commissioned no less than seven hundred gangs of robbers, how can such a nation have the face to condemn the crime in individuals, and hang up twenty of them in a morning! It naturally puts one in mind of a Newgate anecdote: One of the prisoners complained that in the night somebody had taken his buckles out of his shoes; "What the devil!" says another, "have we then thieves amongst us?" It must not be suffered; let us search out the rogue, and pump him "to death."

There is, however, one late instance of an English merchant who would not profit by such ill-gotten gain. He was, it seems, part owner of a ship, which the other owners thought fit to employ as a letter of marque, and which took a number of French prizes. The booty being shared, he has now an agent here inquiring by an advertisement in the Gazette, for those who suffered the loss, in order to make them, as far as in him lies, restitution. This conscientious man is a Quaker.

The Scotch Presbyterians were formerly as tender; for there is still extant an ordinance of the town-council of Edinburgh, made soon after the Reformation, forbidding "the purchase of prize goods, under pain of losing the freedom of the burgh for ever, with
" other

“ other punishment at the will of the magistrates, the
 “ practice of making prizes being contrary to good
 “ conscience, and the rule of treating Christian bre-
 “ thren as we would wish to be treated ; and such
 “ goods are not to be sold by any godly men within
 “ this burgh.” The race of these godly men in Scot-
 land is probably extinct, or their principles abandoned,
 since, as far as that nation had a hand in promoting
 the war against the colonies, prizes and confiscations
 are believed to have been a considerable motive.

It has been for some time a generally received
 opinion, that a military man is not to inquire whe-
 ther a war be just or unjust ; he is to execute his
 orders. All princes, who are disposed to become
 tyrants, most probably approve of this opinion, and
 are willing to establish it, but is it not a dangerous
 one ? since on that principle, if the tyrant com-
 mands his army to attack and destroy not only an
 unoffending neighbour nation, but even his own
 subjects, the army is bound to obey. A negro slave
 in our colonies, being commanded by his master to
 rob or murder a neighbour, or do any other immo-
 ral act, may refuse, and the magistrate will protect
 him in his refusal. The slavery then of a soldier is
 worse than that of a negro ! A conscientious officer,
 if not restrained by the apprehension of its being im-
 puted to another cause, may indeed resign, rather
 than be employed in an unjust war, but the private
 men are slaves for life, and they are, perhaps, inca-
 pable of judging for themselves. We can only lament
 their fate, and still more that of a sailor, who is often

dragged by force from his honest occupation, and compelled to imbrue his hands in, perhaps, innocent blood. But methinks it well behoves merchants (men more enlightened by their education, and perfectly free from any such force or obligation) to consider well of the justice of a war, before they voluntarily engage a gang of ruffians to attack their fellow-merchants of a neighbouring nation, to plunder them of their property, and, perhaps, ruin them and their families if they yield it, or to wound, maim, and murder them, if they endeavour to defend it. Yet these things are done by Christian merchants, whether a war be just or unjust, and it can hardly be just on both sides. They are done by English and American merchants, who nevertheless complain of private theft, and hang by dozens the thieves they have taught by their own example.

It is high time, for the sake of humanity, that a stop were put to this enormity. The United States of America, though better situated than any European nation to make profit by privateering (most of the trade of Europe with the West Indies, passing before their doors), are, as far as in them lies, endeavouring to abolish the practice, by offering, in all their treaties with other powers, an article, engaging solemnly that, in case of a future war, no privateer shall be commissioned on either side, and that unarmed merchant ships shall pursue their voyages unmolested*.

This

* This offer having been accepted by the late King of Prussia, a treaty of amity and commerce was concluded between that Monarch

This will be an happy improvement of the law of nations. The humane and just cannot but wish general success to the proposition.

With unchangeable esteem and affection,

I am, my dear friend,

Ever your's,

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

Monarch and the United States, containing the following humane philanthropic article, in the formation of which Dr. Franklin, as one of the American plenipotentiaries, was principally concerned, viz.

ARTICLE TWENTY-THIRD

IF war should arise between the two contracting parties, the merchants of either country then residing in either, shall be allowed to remain nine months to collect their debts, and settle their affairs, and may depart freely, carrying off all their effects without molestation or hindrance, and all women and children, scholars of every faculty, cultivators of the earth, artizans, manufacturers, and fishermen, unarmed, and inhabiting unfortified towns, villages, or places, and in general all others whose occupations are for the common subsistence and benefit of mankind, shall be allowed to continue their respective employments, and shall not be molested in their persons, nor shall their houses or goods be burned, or otherwise destroyed, nor their fields wasted by the armed force of the enemy, into whose power, by the event of war, they may happen to fall, but if any thing is necessary to be taken from them for the use of such armed force, the same shall be paid for at a reasonable price. And all merchants and trading vessels, employed in exchanging the products of different places, and thereby rendering the necessaries, conveniences, and comforts of human life more easy to be obtained, and more general, shall be allowed to pass free and unmolested, and neither of the contracting powers shall grant or issue any commission to any private armed vessels, empowering them to take or destroy such trading vessels, or interrupt such commerce.

*LETTER from Dr. FRANKLIN to Madame B***.*

Written at Passy, near Paris.

YOU perhaps recollect, Madam, when we lately spent so happy a day in the delightful gardens of *Moulin Joli*, with the amiable society who resided there, that I stopped in one of the walks, and permitted the company to pass on without me.

We had been shewn an infinite number of dead flies of the ephemeron species, the successive generations of which, it is said, are born and die in the same day.

I happened to perceive, on a leaf, a living family engaged in conversation. You know, Madam, I understand the language spoken by every species of animals inferior to our own, and the very close application I give to the study of them, is perhaps the best excuse I can offer for the little proficiency I have made in your charming language.

Curiosity led me to listen to the conversation of these little creatures: but, from the vivacity peculiar to their nation, three or four of them spoke at once, and I could scarcely learn any thing from their discourse. I understood, however, from some broken sentences which I caught now and then, that they were warmly disputing about the merit of two foreign musicians, a drone and a gnat, and that they appeared to spend their time in these debates with as
little

little concern for the brevity of life, as if they had been sure of living for a whole month. “Happy people!” said I to myself, “you certainly live under a wise, equitable, and moderate government; since no public grievances call forth your complaints, and your only source of dispute is the perfection or imperfection of foreign music.”

I left them soon after, in order to observe an aged ephemeron with grey hairs, who, perched solitary on a leaf, was talking to himself. His soliloquy will, I believe, amuse that amiable friend to whom I am indebted for the most agreeable of my recreations, the charms of animated conversation, and the divine harmony of musical execution.

“It was the opinion,” said he, “of the learned philosophers of our race, who lived and flourished before us, that this vast world itself could not subsist more than eighteen hours, and that opinion to me appears to have some foundation, since, by the motion of the great luminary that gives life to the whole nation, and which in my time has, in a perceptible manner, declined considerably towards the ocean that bounds the earth, it must necessarily terminate its course at that period, be extinguished in the waters that surround us, and deliver up the world to cold and darkness, the infallible forerunners of death and universal destruction. I have lived seven hours in these eighteen; it is a great age, amounting to no less than four

“ hundred and twenty minutes. How few of us live
 “ so long!

“ I have seen whole generations spring up, flourish, and disappear. My present friends are the
 “ children and grandchildren of the friends of my
 “ youth, who, alas! are no more, and whom I must
 “ soon follow, for, in the ordinary course of nature,
 “ I cannot expect, though in good health, to live
 “ more than seven or eight minutes longer.

“ What avail at present all my labours, all my fatigues, to accumulate a provision of sweet dew
 “ which I shall not live long enough to consume?
 “ What avail the political discussions in which I am
 “ engaged for the service of my countrymen, the inhabitants of this bush, or my philosophical inquiries, devoted to the welfare of the species in general? In politics, what are laws without manners?

“ A course of minutes will render the present generation as corrupt as the ancient inhabitants of other bushes, and, of consequence, as unhappy.
 “ And in philosophy, how slow is our progress! Alas! art is long, and life is short! My friends would console me with the name which, they say, I shall leave behind me. They tell me I have lived long enough for glory and for nature. But what is fame to an ephemeron that will be no longer in existence? What will history become, when, at the eighteenth hour, the world itself will be drawn to

“ a close,

“ a close, and be no longer any thing but a heap of
“ ruins ?

“ For myself, after having made so many busy re-
“ searches, the only real blessings that remain to me,
“ are, the satisfaction of having spent my life with
“ the view of being useful, the pleasing conversation
“ of a small number of good lady ephemeras, and
“ now and then the captivating smiles of Madame
“ Bst, and the sweet sounds of her *forte piano*.”

EULOGIUM

ON

Benjamin Franklin, LL.D. &c.

DELIVERED IN THE ROTUNDA,

ON THE 21ST OF JULY, 1790,

IN THE NAME OF THE COMMONS OF PARIS;

*In presence of the Deputies to the Legislative Assembly, and of all
the Departments in the Kingdom, the Mayor, the Com-
mandant-General of the National Guards, the
Representatives of the Commons, the Presi-
dents of the Districts, and the Electors
of the Capital.*

BY THE ABBE FAUCHET,

NOW CONSTITUTIONAL BISHOP OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CALVADOS,
AND A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL CONVENTION

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Representatives of the Commons of Paris passed a vote on the twenty-second of July 1790, in consequence of which it was ordered, that this Eulogium should be printed, and presented to the National Assembly of France, and the Congress of America.

EULOGIUM

ON

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN;

*Pronounced by the Abbé FAUCHET, in the Name of
the Commons of Paris.*

A SECOND creation has taken place; the elements of society begin to combine together; the moral universe is now seen issuing from chaos; the genius of Liberty is awakened, and springs up; she sheds her divine light and creative powers upon the two hemispheres: A great nation, astonished at seeing herself free, stretches her arms from one extremity of the earth to the other, and embraces the first nation that became so: The foundations of a new city are created in the two worlds; brother-nations hasten to inhabit it; it is the city of mankind!

One of the first founders of this universal city was the immortal Franklin, the deliverer of America.

The second founders, who accelerated this great work, made it worthy of Europe—the legislators of France have rendered the most solemn homage to his memory. They have said—“ A friend of humanity
“ is dead; mankind ought to be overwhelmed with
“ sorrow! Nations have hitherto only worn mourning
“ for Kings; let us assume it for a Man, and let the
“ tears of Frenchmen mingle with those of Ameri-
“ cans,

“ cans, in order to do honour to the memory of one
 “ of the Fathers of Liberty !”

The city of Paris, which once contained this philosopher within its walls, which was intoxicated with the pleasure of hearing, admiring, and loving him, of gathering from his lips the maxims of moral legislation, and of imbibing from the effusions of his heart a passion for the public welfare, rivals Boston and Philadelphia, his two native cities (for in one he was born as it were a man, and in the other a legislator), in its profound attachment to his merit and his glory.

It has commanded this funeral solemnity, in order to perpetuate the gratitude and the grief of this third country, which, by the courage and activity with which it has profited of his lessons, has shewn itself worthy of having him at once for an instructor and a model.

In selecting me for the 'nterpreter of its wishes, it has declared. that it is less to the talents of an orator, than the patriotism of a citizen, the zeal of a preacher of liberty, and the sensibility of a friend of men, that it hath confided this solemn function. In this point of view, I may speak with a holy confidence; for I have the public opinion, and the testimony of my own conscience, to second my wishes. Since nothing else is wanting than freedom, and sensibility, for that species of eloquence which this eulogium requires, I am satisfied, for I already possess them.

My voice shall extend to France, to America, to posterity, I am now to do justice to a great man, the
 founder

founder of trans-Atlantic freedom, I am to praise him in the name of the mother-city of French liberty; I myself also am a man; I am a freeman; I possess the suffrages of my fellow-citizens: This is enough; my discourse shall be immortal!

PART I.

THE academies, the philosophical societies, the learned associations, which have done themselves honour by inscribing the name of Franklin in their records, can best appreciate the debt due to his genius, for having extended the power of man over nature, and presented new and sublime ideas, in a style simple as truth, and pure as light.

It is not the naturalist and the philosopher that the orator of the commons of Paris ought to describe; it is the *man*, who hath accelerated the progress of social order, it is the *legislator*, who hath prepared the liberty of nations!

Benjamin Franklin was born at the commencement of the present century, in Boston, the capital of New England.

His father, persecuted in his own country on account of his religious opinions (for the English, so wavering in regard to religion, and who have so often changed it by *act of Parliament*, at the nod of corrupt

rupt Kings, or fanatical chiefs, have always been, and are at this very day, persecutors) his father, I say, took refuge in the new world, where the church of England, not having as yet intruded her intolerant solicitude, permitted the liberty of conscience

His profession was obscure, but it is from this very obscurity that it is glorious for him to have elevated himself to the head of his nation, and to become the chief, as it were, of mankind.

He who was destined to be the founder and the president of the Philosophical Society of Philadelphia, the creator and the soul of the congress of America, was at first brought up to the trade of a tallow-chandler. The celebrated orator Flechier began life among ourselves precisely in the same manner. It may be considered as a prodigy that, under the feudal aristocracy, he should have ever become a rich Bishop! The hereditary Nobles, the titled families (it is but yesterday as it were they have ceased to exist in France), regarding his elevation with a degree of surprise, mingled with scorn, were unable to conceive how a Minister dared to confer a Bishopric upon a plebeian. "Duke," replied the Bishop of Nîmes to one of his contemporaries, who reproached him with the occupation of his father, "this is in truth what distinguishes us from each other. If you had been born in the same station that I was, you would have still remained a maker of candles!"

Gentlemen, I have mentioned this anecdote, because it is something in the manner of Franklin. He
might

might have said the same thing to the English Nobility, and all those insulters of merit, who think themselves dispensed from possessing any, because, in virtue of their family, they occupy the first employments in the state, and obtain, even through the folly of their titles, all the honours of society.

A very limited business, and one which presented no opportunity for the developement of the human faculties, could not be deemed worthy of the genius of Franklin. The art of printing had been scarce established in America, he turned his views towards this polite art, to which the destiny of the human genius is attached.

He laboured assiduously in this profession, first at Boston, afterwards at Philadelphia, and at length at London, where, while he acquired a considerable degree of perfection in this art, his mind, always of a thinking turn, made a variety of observations on the vices of the English government, and accumulated in silence the means of making typography more useful to his country, and to human kind.

On his return to the capital of Pennsylvania, he was able to work at, direct, and even to supply matter for those presses, whence were to issue that knowledge destined to be the harbinger of the glorious day of liberty.

English America was designed, in the eternal views of Providence, and in the combinations already ripe in the mind of Franklin, to see the sun of justice first elevated above its horizon, a sun who was pro-

gressively to spread his rays over all parts of the world. Its colonies were formed of men, who did not find themselves sufficiently free in England; who would not depend, in regard to religion, but upon Heaven and their own conscience, in their morals, but upon civil equality and good laws, in their happiness, but upon domestic society and the simplicity of virtue.

Penn, the first man who arose out of that social chaos in which the nations had been plunged, founded Philadelphia, the City of Brethren, and which, in consequence of this title, which it hath ever since so amply justified, merits the appellation of the *capital of the human kind*. It is opened to human nature, without restriction; for the law which prohibits the entrance of the atheist and the sluggard, as not being men, does not present, as Franklin himself has very justly observed, any more than a threatening exception, which cannot possibly be carried into execution.

“ If,” says he, “ an atheist existed in any other
 “ part of the universe, he would be instantly con-
 “ verted on entering into a city where every thing is
 “ so admirably conducted, and if there was a slug-
 “ gard, having the three amiable sisters, Riches, Sci-
 “ ence, and Virtue, who are the daughters of Labour,
 “ continually before his eyes, he would soon con-
 “ ceive an affection for them, and endeavour to ob-
 “ tain them from their father.”

Delightful idea! worthy of a sage philosopher, the object of our present homage! It, at one and the same time, describes both Franklin and Philadelphia.

A Catholic

A Catholic priest, I shall doubtless be reproached for delivering an eulogium on the Quakers, as I have heretofore been reproached for praising the Jansenists, as I am reproached at this very moment for pronouncing a funeral oration on a Protestant, who himself professed religious principles different from those that were spread over the face of his country

These reproaches do me honour, for they issue from fanaticism, the greatest scourge of society. Yes, I have praised, and I now praise again in the name of the commons of Paris, both with eagerness and affection, that philanthropic Jansenist, if they please, but, at the same time, very catholic and very holy preceptor of those who are born deaf and dumb,—the virtuous Philadelphians, simple and sublime observers of universal fraternity,—the principal philosopher of Protestantism, the sage Franklin, who, without being perfect in his faith, yet possessed the perfection of evangelical benevolence.

And here, Gentlemen, since the question of universal toleration presents itself, and enters of its own accord into the chain of ideas, which are successively to complete the character of the great moralist whom I now attempt to describe, permit me to stop. After developing the principles of this sage, I shall pursue my subject, and fulfil the task you have imposed upon me.

Men cannot be brethren, and, consequently, cannot be social creatures, while one pretends to reprove the other for the opinions which they have formed, and

think themselves, on account of this imaginary difference, to be separated and divided from each other, as far as heaven is distant from hell.

No one can judge the conscience but God alone.

He who affirms that man ought to believe, or not believe, this or that doctrine, often renders himself guilty of injustice, and always of temerity.

The first genius of the universe, although inflamed with the most ardent love for truth, might embrace a religious error, and think himself bound by his conscience to defend it. Who is the audacious mortal, that pretends to have been able to calculate all the lights and shades, which might have intervened between the most purple or the most sublime minds, and who dares to say—"all ought to believe like me?"

There are invincible prejudices to an uniformity of faith. The effects of education, the ideas instilled into the human mind, during infancy and youth, those religious descriptions which inspire the imagination with awful terrors, the customary practice of adoration, the sanction of self-love in behalf of received dogmas, a thousand acts of virtue practised by sincere believers in a particular faith, all these may inevitably detain the most righteous and just men in the religion of their fathers, although it may be mingled with error.

The sage himself, who by means of the activity of his mind, and the force of his reflections, raises himself, while he implores the divine assistance, above
vulgar

vulgar ideas and popular superstitions, only floats in the immensity of eternal conceptions, and redescends, with a holy fear, to the elements of his primitive faith, he does nothing more than separate it from that impure mixture, by which fanaticism, in his eyes, has evidently altered its venerable simplicity. Undoubtedly, the indolence that precludes reflection, the animal passions, the abuse of our faculties, may retain, or draw us, in respect to religion, into those errors which are imputable to us. But it appertains to us, and to Him only, who reads the heart, and probes the thoughts, to mark them down for reprobation, and to punish them at the day of judgment.

Those actions alone, which are manifestly contrary to the laws of universal morality, are submitted to the inspection of men, and the sentence of society. The vicious, the base, the wicked, even when they profess the true faith, are the enemies of humanity. The virtuous, the good, the benevolent, even while their faith is erroneous, are the friends and the benefactors of mankind.

Such, Gentlemen, were the doctrines of the sage, whose memory we are now doing honour to, and, if this were the place, it would be easy to prove, as he himself has demonstrated, that the true spirit of the gospel consists in indulgence, charity, brotherly love, concord, peace, and universal unity.

Notwithstanding this, “out of the pale of Catholic faith,” says one, “there is no salvation for mankind.”

THIS maxim is true, Gentlemen, but those who deduce from it the reprobation of all those who are of a different religion, and a frightful intolerance towards nearly the whole human race, are fanatics and impostors.

It is one of the avowed principles of the Catholic faith, that all those who strictly observe the natural law, that is to say, all virtuous men, appertain to the true church, and have Jesus Christ, the light of souls, for their master and inspector.

I pronounce this sacred name with so much more satisfaction in this discourse, as Franklin was accustomed to invoke it with the most respectful awe. But those who do not know, and who "practise naturally," as the Apostle says, his divine law, shall be judged after the testimony of their own consciences, and arrive, by means of the miracles wrought through his grace, at the true light. Thus according to the principles of our religion, no one can pronounce upon the reprobation of a single man, because all men are in the hands of a Father who can, and who wishes to, save all, he has expressly told us so; and, although his justice may proscribe incorrigible sinners, he has left to himself the final determination of their doom, that so our hearts may not be tortured in regard to any of our brethren, who pursue along with us the passage to eternity. A doctrine truly Catholic, which places all men in the communion of our love, and points out to us the sages of all the countries in the world who have done honour to their lives by a series of useful

virtues, and thus become the friends of God, and the adopted children of the universal church.

This religion of virtue, by which we are instructed to love God and man, and which, according to the sacred Scriptures, is the only one pure and spotless, was visible in the heart of Franklin, and in all his works.

He preached it in the instructions which he composed, and which he printed at Philadelphia. He adorned them by means of a simplicity, a plainness, and, at the same time, an intelligence, a sensibility, and a happy air of calmness and tranquillity, which affected every bosom. He excelled in those religious parables, of which the Scriptures furnish so many amiable and sublime examples.

Permit me, Gentlemen, to quote one composed by him against intolerance and persecution. In it he describes, in the same style in which Genesis is written, the Patriarch Abraham exercising hospitality towards an old man, who refuses to join him in thanksgiving to the Almighty God, the Creator of heaven and earth

The stranger tells him, that he will not adore any one but the God of his own country, and that he will on no account participate in any other worship. On this, the zeal of Abraham is kindled, he pushes the man out of his tent, in the dead of night, and chases him into the desert. In a short time, the voice of the Almighty is heard “ Abraham, where is the “ stranger ?” On this, Abraham replies—“ Lord,

“ he refused to adore thee, and I chased the infidel
 “ away !” And God said—“ for one hundred four
 “ score and eighteen years I have bore with this unbe-
 “ liever, I have nourished and clothed him all this
 “ time, notwithstanding his rebellion against me,
 “ and yet thou, who art thyself a sinner, could not
 “ bear with him for one night !”

On this, Abraham cried out—“ I have sinned, O
 “ Lord ! let not thy anger fall upon me !” And he
 arose, and ran to the desert, he sought the old man,
 he found him, he brought him to his tent, he
 treated him with kindness, and sent him away next
 morning with many presents !

How much does this, Gentlemen, resemble the style
 of the holy Scriptures ! every person participates in the
 inspiration with which it is written, we are tempted
 to search the book of Genesis, and wish to believe
 that we shall find it there ! Another allegory, composed
 by Franklin, and borrowed from the art which he
 exercised, offers a convincing testimony of his belief
 in the immortality of the soul, the purification of
 it in another life, and the resurrection of the body,
 I allude to his epitaph, written by himself*. How
 admirable, how short, and yet how full of sentiment,
 are the expressions contained in every line, evange-
 lic faith and religious hope are here evident, and they
 forcibly point out the end of life, and the prize of
 virtue.

* See page 192.

It was thus that Franklin, in his periodical works, which had a prodigious circulation on the Continent of America, laid the sacred foundations of social morality. He was no less inimitable in the developement of the same morality, when applied to the duties of friendship, general charity, the employment of one's time, the happiness attendant upon good works, the necessary combination of private with public welfare, the propriety and necessity of industry, and to that happy and blissful state which puts us at ease with society and with ourselves. The "Proverbs of Old Henry," and "Poor Richard," are in the hands both of the learned and the ignorant, they contain the most sublime morality, reduced to popular language and common comprehension, and form the catechism of happiness for all mankind.

Franklin was too great a moralist, and too well acquainted with human affairs, not to perceive that women were the arbiters of manners. He strove to perfect their empire, and accordingly engaged them to adorn the sceptre of virtue with their graces. It is in their power to excite courage, to overthrow vice by means of their disdain, to kindle civility, and to light up in every heart the holy love of our country.

His daughter, who was opulent, and honoured with the public esteem, helped to manufacture and to make up the clothing for the army with her own hands, and spread abroad a noble emulation among the female citizens, who became eager to assist those by means of the needle and the spindle,
who

who were saving the State with their swords and their
 6100

With the constant attendant upon true wisdom, and the grace ever flowing from true sentiment, this grave philosopher knew how to converse with the other sex, to inspire them with a taste for domestic occupations, to hold out to them the prize attendant upon honour unaccompanied by reproach, and fulfil the duty of conveying the first precepts of education, in order to teach them to their children, and thus to acquit the debt due to nature, and fulfil the hope of society! It must be acknowledged that, in his own country, he addressed himself to minds capable of comprehending him.

Immortal females of America! I will tell it to the daughters of France, and they only are fit to applaud you! You have attained the utmost of what your sex is capable, you possess the beauty, the simplicity, the manners, at once natural and pure—the primitive graces of the golden age. It was among you that liberty was first to have its origin. But the empire of freedom, which is extended to France, is about to carry your manners along with it, and produce a revolution in morals as well as in politics.

Already our female citizens (for they have lately become such) are not any longer occupied with those frivolous ornaments, and vain pleasures, which were nothing more than the amusements of slavery; they have awakened the love of liberty in the bosoms of fathers, of brothers, and of husbands, they have
 encour-

encouraged them to make the most generous sacrifices; their delicate hands have removed the earth, dragged it along, and helped to elevate the immense amphitheatre of the grand confederation. It is no longer the love of voluptuous softness that attracts them regard, it is the sacred fire of patriotism.

The laws which are to reform education, and with it the national manners, are already prepared, they shall advance, they shall fortify the cause of liberty by means of their happy influence, and become the second saviours of their country!

Franklin did not omit any of the means of being useful to men, or serviceable to society. He spoke to all conditions, to both sexes, to every age. This amiable moralist descended, in his writings, to the most artless details, to the most ingenuous familiarities, to the first ideas of a rural, a commercial, and a civil life, to the dialogues of old men and children, full at once of all the verdure and all the maturity of wisdom, in short, the prudent lessons arising from the exposition of those obscure, happy, easy virtues, which form so many links in the chain of a good man's life, derived immense weight from that reputation for genius which he had acquired, by being one of the first naturalists and greatest philosophers in the universe.

At one and the same time, he governed nature in the heavens and in the hearts of men.

Amidst the tempests of the atmosphere, he directed the thunder, amidst the storms of society, he directed the

the people. Thus, Cicero, when with what attentive doctrine, and what religious respect, one must hear the voice of a wise man, who preached up human happiness, when it is recollected that it was the power of one of the same man who regulated the lightning.

He determined the confederacies, in order to extend the distributive services, extending in the same manner as he elevated the powers, in order peaceably to invade the most terrible fire of the elements. He thus created (O power immense of wisdom and of genius!) two authorities of the Deity.

Figure to your own minds, this I go with the celestial physiognomy which he possessed, with that calm and august forehead, beaming, in his own person, an authority over the natural and social world, does he not resemble a beneficent God descended upon earth, in order to counteract the wrath of heaven and teach virtue to mankind?

The leisure hours of Franklin were so many acts of goodness, which, if they were not too numerous, would form the chief chain of this oration. His amusements consisted in experiments which resembled prodigies, and of which a single instance will suffice to give some idea. He himself, in a letter to one of the most learned Members of the Royal Society of London*, has presented the description of a festival, which he gave to his friends and the public upon the borders of the Schuylkill.

* M. Comenius.

An electric spark, without any other conductor than the water, served to light the volatile spirit prepared to illuminate both banks of the river, at one and the same moment. The invisible shock of the electric matter, appeared, to the ravished eyes of the spectators, to kill the game and wild fowl prepared for the treat, culinary instruments turned and dressed the viands by means of the heat arising from the ethereal flame, while the goblets, as if filled by magic, became replenished with the choicest wines of Europe.

In the mean time his guests, composed of the most learned men in Philadelphia, accompanied by a discharge of artillery from an electric battery, drank the healths of all the famous philosophers of France, of England, of Switzerland, of Holland, of Italy, and of Germany, by turns, while the echoes arising from the neighbouring shores spread abroad and multiplied these solemn salutations. The joyous acclamations of the people of a country formerly savage and deserted, but at present inhabited by numerous nations of new men, who have formed an alliance between science and morality, reached to the skies.

You may easily conceive, Gentlemen, what a mild, but sure ascendant, this sage, who inspired his citizens with a taste for such noble pleasures, exercised over their minds! Not a single moment did he lose in the course of his whole life, not one of his thoughts but what tended to the public welfare, not one of his labours or of his leisure hours which did not say to men,

men, " It is thus that existence becomes valuable,
 ' it is thus that mankind become happy ! ' "

I have not as yet attempted to paint any thing more than the philosopher, who, by the force of his ideas, and the communication of his sentiments, bestowed a charm unknown before, and a new activity upon social morality

Franklin had formed men He had conceived still more noble projects—he wished to create citizens. He had already completed the basis, which is morality, he determined upon this to elevate the column of legislation It is now the legislator whom I must exhibit, it is the electician of nations that is about to begin his operations, it is he who composed and completed the most charming model of liberty that was ever presented to the universe, and it is to France, now become free, it is before her first legislature that I am ambitious of exhibiting this picture; it will awaken slaves, it will transport Frenchmen!

P A R T II.

" TRAVELLER, inform Sparta that we have died
 " in obedience to her holy laws."

This inscription over the bodies of those who perished at Thermopylæ, is the most superb monument that was ever erected to the honour of Greece: It
 proves

proves that antiquity recognized citizens in all a gle of the world.

The city of Lacedemon, the only one which merits that appellation, on account of the separation of the three powers which organized its government (for the anarchy of Athens, and the war of civic elements in Rome, prohibit them, although in other respects immortal, from enjoying this singular honour), the city of Lacedemon was destined to endure but a short time, for it had not humanity for its basis. Mankind themselves were not as yet acquainted with it. It was necessary that whole ages should first elapse; and the Spartans, citizens without being men, were to be annihilated by the force of Nature, who does not long tolerate whatever contradicts her laws.

Methinks I now behold a more noble monument erected between the old and the new world. It rises out of the bosom of the Atlantic ocean, it looks on one side towards Europe, and on the other towards America. The image of the august Franklin surmounts it, and points to the following inscription. "Men, love your fellow men! Be free! Promote commerce and the arts; but, above all, cultivate humanity."

Legislator of mankind! thy countrymen, the Americans, obey thee, France listens to thy voice, she repeats thy accents, the universe awakes at the sound!

The light scattered over the world by the philosopher of nature, from the city of Philadelphia, not only excited the scintillations of private, but it also kindled

kindled the fire of public, virtue, which composed the life of nations.

From the banks of the Delaware and the Schuylkill, Franklin attentively surveyed the conduct of England, marked her errors and her impudence, aroused that just discontent which her cruelties inspired, observed how far the patience of the people could be stretched, reinforced the principles of liberty, but yet preached up peace and moderation, until that day should arrive, in which violence and injustice were no longer to be suffered, and a revolution was to be expected as an inevitable event. His wisdom prophesied the approach of liberty, and accomplished it. his fellow-countrymen, the Americans, who felt the iron hand of despotism, but yet scarcely dreamed of independence, were already, in the calculations of his genius, the first free citizens of the universe.

The ministers of England were well acquainted with the ascendancy of this great man, and were alarmed at his influence. In conformity to their system of corruption, they were determined to bring him over to their views, and were persuaded that, by bestowing one of the lucrative employments upon him, which they had the disposal of in the colonies, his private interest would induce him to assist them in subjugating his countrymen.

He was accordingly appointed Director General of the Post Office belonging to the English colonies in America*.

* He was entrusted with the southern department only. TRANS.

In this employment he perceived that he could be useful to the people and to himself, for it furnished him with a better opportunity of communicating his principles throughout the continent. He well knew that his labours would accelerate the freedom of America; he was authorized by his office to visit all the provinces without the least suspicion whatever; he thus was enabled to sound the dispositions of the inhabitants, to augment their horror for oppression, and to induce them to reconquer the rights of man and of citizens.

Franklin undoubtedly foresaw, while destroying an oppressive government, the favours of which he turned to the public advantage, that he should make great sacrifices in regard to his own private interest; but his natural simplicity and prudent œconomy had enabled him to accumulate a fortune sufficient to insure his independence; and he always dreaded great opulence, either to himself or his fellow-citizens.

He had always two great ideas in contemplation: The first was, to elevate England and all her colonies to the principles of civil liberty; and if that did not happen, at least to give freedom to his native country. Had the former scheme succeeded (and it gave him the greater degree of pleasure), the parliament of England was to have had a full national and colonial representation. The King was to have carried the legal wishes of the fellow-citizens of the two continents into execution, and the perfect combina-

tion of the legislative power of all, and the executive power of one, would have realized to Great Britain that noble constitution destined to form the happiness of France.

But if it were impossible thus to insure the felicity of the whole empire, and if the system of colonial oppression was to be continued, then he thought that a grand example ought to be set by America to the world, that the cause of the people ought to be avenged, and that Liberty ought to hoist her standard in another hemisphere.

Thus all the views of this great man were in perfect coincidence with the principles of truth and of justice, for whatever might be the last determination of the oppressors, they themselves would either become citizens, or enable their fellow slaves to become so, by establishing the first free government that ever existed in the world.

Such was the position of public affairs when Franklin was sent to England by the Assembly of Pennsylvania, in order to defend the colonies against the enterprises of the court. He did not dissemble his opinions to the English ministry, who, at that period, were employing their usual perfidious arts of bribery and corruption, in order to exact several new and vexatious imposts from his countrymen.

Franklin announced to them the infallible result of their proceedings.

The Americans were alarmed, and protested with one accord against this act of tyranny. Their conduct

duſt appeared to the generous patriots of England (where there are many good citizens, although they are not ſuffered to rule the nation) to be dictated by the juſt rights derived from oppreſſion ; but it ſeemed to be the revolt of ſlaves, who wiſhed to free themſelves from the authority of a maſter, in the eyes of the ſervile minions of the ſovereign, who are more numerous, and who are always employed by the government.

Amidſt theſe important conjunctures, Franklin is ordered to the bar of the Houſe of Commons, he obeys. How great appeared that man, the defender of liberty, before an ariſtocracy who monopolize the independence of a nation ! He was unacquainted with the queſtions which were to be put to him, but his mind was ever prepared. Not a ſingle vague idea, not an uſeleſs or unneceſſary word ; thoughts ſimple, but yet vaſt, ſentiments loyal, but yet generous ; the boldeſt aſſertions, the moſt convincing reaſons ; the moſt poſitive denials, afforded no triumph to his enemies. With a maſculine eloquence and undisguiſed truth, he proved all the firſt acts of the American inſurrection to be legitimate, and aſſerted that all the projects that could be ſuggeſted by Engliſh violence, would be abortive and without effect.

“ Either let us be free together,” ſays he, “ or
 “ we ſhall be ſo without, and even in ſpite of you.
 “ If you do not annul your oppreſſive laws, we ſhall
 “ continue to make new ones independent of you.
 “ If you endeavour to ſubjugate us, we ſhall tri-
 ‘ umph. Your armies ? They are not numerous

“ enough. Your navy ? All the navies upon earth
 “ are not capable of making us submit to your will.
 “ Make your election between our love and our
 “ hate, we have already made our choice between the
 “ liberty that is to combine us, and those chains with
 “ which we are to be manacled.”

This affords but a feeble image of the dignified
 conduct of Franklin in the face of all England. Cy-
 neas beheld at Rome, in that senate which governed
 Italy, an assembly of gods, and trembled ! Frank-
 lin beheld at London, in that senate which com-
 manded the seas of the two worlds, a corrupted legis-
 lature, and was undismayed. The ambassador of
 Tuscany spoke in the name of a King, and what was
 a King before the Roman people ? But the agent of
 Philadelphia spoke as a man in the name of men,
 whom he was about to render free, and free men
 have ever been respected as the first of human beings
 by the English !

He retired honoured by the nation, but detested
 by the Court, convinced that a parliament sold to
 the ministry would smite America with the sceptre of
 despotism, and support their wrongs by the swords of
 mercenaries, that his countrymen would be forced to
 defend their own rights, to consummate their inde-
 pendence, and to vindicate the cause of human
 nature

Returned to his native continent, he revolved all
 these ideas in his bosom at Philadelphia. Washing-
 ton and Adams enter into his views ; the first con-
 gress

gress is convoked and assembled, Franklin, or rather the Genius of Liberty, presides at it, every thing is resolved upon, new laws are enacted, but the principles of them already exist, all the colonists are citizens; the patriot troops are about to be called forth; they are already formed——all the citizens are soldiers!

The philosopher of humanity, the friend of peace, Franklin had upwards of ten years before prepared all the plans of the insurgent army. The number and order of the regiments and companies, the pay, the instructions, all the military details, written by his own hand two *lustres* before the insurrection, and deposited in the archives of Philadelphia, attest at once the extent and foresight of his ideas.

Advance, Englishmen, arm your fleets; pour in the warriors of your three kingdoms, transport the mercenaries of Germany to America, now become free, for Franklin presides in her councils, and Washington regulates her armies! Wisdom, and at length victory, declare against you.

By means of those manœuvres which display at once the skill and the ferocity of your bands of robbers, you redouble the energy of freemen, add to the horror against tyrants, and enlure to the United States but greater triumphs. The contrast exhibited by the humanity of the citizens of America in the midst of most of your most disgraceful defeats, and the fury of your servile troops in their slight but impious successes, shall change your glory to opprobrium, and the blood of a few peaceable men, immolated to your

rage, shall furnish the seeds of victory for the combatants of liberty !

I shall not here enter into the exposition of the sagacious conduct, the profound combinations, the unexpected resources, the invincible resistance, the decisive actions, the prodigies of glory, which have immortalised the campaigns of the armies of Independence.

They did not possess any metal, but iron, any military knowledge, but courage, any experience in combats, but a genius fitted for victory; any discipline proceeding from long previous preparation, but a General, who was all of a sudden the creator of an army.

From men who wish to become free, from Franklin who directs, from Washington who commands, what is not to be expected ?

However, even iron at last is wanting, it is procured from Europe. Officers are not in sufficient abundance; they are invited from France.

Franklin, now in the seventieth year of his age, had just returned from Canada, where he had been drawn, during the most rigorous season of the year, by the interests of the revolution, and, in the course of his journey, had traversed, in company with Montgomery, the rivers and the lakes, at that time covered with ice. He is now appointed to proceed to France, in order to assist the efforts of Deane, and invite those succours which they were to procure from a generous people, who had submitted, during a dishonourable peace, to all the haughty pride, and all the intolerable outrages, of the English ministry.

He

He departs instantly, although he did not possess a single piece of gold, for his country was destitute of money. He arrives at Paris with a cargo of tobacco, in the same manner as when Holland determined to become free, her deputies arrived at Brussels with a convoy of herrings, in order to pay their expences.

Admiration preceded, attachment followed him. Every tongue celebrated his name, every look was fixed upon, every heart leaped at the sight of him: He spoke, he was listened to, and he succeeded. The treaty of commerce with the insurgents is proclaimed, ammunition and warlike instruments are sent from our ports—America receives them with gratitude, the free men of the new have now allies in the old world, they are soon also to have rivals, emulous to imitate, and, if possible, to excel them.

At the voice of Franklin, at the voice of glory, appear, young Fayette, or rather disappear to Europe! Shew thyself to America, astonished at thy noble daring, France shall not learn thy flight, but with the news of thy first victory in the country of liberty.

The furious English every-where attacked our vessels, but they no longer possessed the advantage of those perfidious stratagems which they had formerly made use of, before a declaration of war.

Our naval armaments were in readiness; Orvillers and Estaing command them. In one quarter * of the globe the English fleet experiences an invinci-

* This alludes to the engagement off Ushant.

ble resistance, and finds its only resource to consist in flight, in another† it meets with a signal defeat, and the West-India islands‡ are obliged to receive into their ports those troops which were destined to conquer them. Paul Jones §, an American commander, takes several prizes upon the very coasts of Great Britain, Rochambeau leads the French legions in the United States; La Fayette ¶ is the hero of the two nations, Washington is the arbiter of victory.

The independence of America is consummated; England, in its turn, is constrained to sue for peace. The sovereignty of a great people is acknowledged, and from the banks of the Seine, Franklin, the harbinger, the director, and the very soul of this sublime novelty in the universe, conferring all the glory upon those who had the heroism of acquiring it by means of arms, receives, with the calmness of a philosopher, the felicitations of America, of France, of the English patriots themselves, and of all those men who feel the godlike workings of humanity.

The sovereignty of the nation is established, this then is the moment to perfect their laws. The ambassador of America was its legislator. He had already prepared, and he now transmits to his fellow-citizens

† At Granada

‡ Tolago, &c.

§ This officer, so celebrated during the American war, died lately in great poverty at Paris.

¶ The subsequent conduct of his General has conferred the eulogiums of the patriot Bishop of Calados in *o anathe aus*

the constitution of Pennsylvania, which connects it with all the establishments of the confederated states.

The rights of man are developed, for the first time, in laws simple and beneficent as those of nature; the rights of citizens are elevated on the fundamental basis of society. The organization of the public power is combined with the private interest of every man, and the universal good of humanity, with the individual advantage of every patriot, and the general prosperity of the country.

The institutions of Franklin are unanimously hailed as the code of wisdom and beneficence. We have adopted them into the new laws of France, and we ought to regard their author as one of the founders of this sacred constitution, which is about to attain all the elevation of reason and of justice, all the perfection of social and natural order, and which will one day be the Phœnos of the human kind.

Here, Gentlemen, the interest of this discourse becomes augmented. It is my intention to compare America become independent, with France now free, and to preface, from these circumstances, the destinies of the universe.

I have already said, and I repeat it again—The Anglo-Americans were the first great people who possessed the plenitude of liberty; the first that prepared itself to enjoy the perfection of freedom is the French nation, and in both these points of view Franklin is the first legislator of the world. Let the present and future generations hear and judge!

In

In Switzerland a senatorial aristocracy domineers ; in Holland the Stadtholderate tends towards despotism ; in England the people possess a corrupt, and but an inadequate, representation . The Minister regulates the elections , a House of Peers arrests every thing at its will ; the Court, by means of money, obtains money , by money, suffrages . In short, in whatever point of view you are pleased to consider the public welfare, the King hath an absolute power over it. If there is a country in the world where there is a phantom of liberty idolised by the people, and no real liberty which they can love, it is there. But this very phantom had hitherto something venerable in it. The imaginations of the English, exalted by the temporary glory of their country, beholding around her nothing but nations of slaves, who wished to continue such, they, with good reason, have looked upon themselves, until now, as the people who possessed the first rank in the universe.

Franklin once said to the English nation, “ Admit
 “ all the men who belong to your government in the
 “ different parts of the globe, to a free competition
 “ for, and an equal representation in, your legisla-
 “ ture, let the King alone sway the executive scep-
 “ tre, and never be permitted to stretch it forth but
 “ in the name of those laws made by the representa-
 “ tives, and consented to by the colonies and pro-
 “ vinces ; you will then possess the supreme social
 “ unity, and the grand monarchy of liberty. The
 “ universe will all assimilate to your empire, or at
 “ least

“ least all the earth will be eager to imitate such a
 “ beautiful model; you will thus have the glory
 “ of commencing the happiness of the world, and
 “ ensuring the fraternity of the human kind ”

He spoke to those who were resolved to be deaf, who would not hear him, and who embraced nothing but a chimera of liberty in their own island, which they obstinately persisted in supporting by a tyrannical domination abroad.

But America inclined her head, and listened to his voice. France, although still crouching under her old and heavy fetters, ruminating even then in her thoughts the great lessons of Mably and of Rousseau, lent an attentive ear, and said—“ The moment will
 “ arrive, it fast approaches, when that which Eng-
 “ land had not the wisdom to undertake, I shall have
 “ the glory to execute ”

In the mean time, the new States organize themselves into a federate republic. Every other species of government was impracticable. The perfection arising from *unity* could not be expected from a multitude of independent provinces, of which each possessed the sovereign right of adopting whatever form it pleased.

The mutual necessity of allying and connecting itself together, so as to form but one people, gave rise to the Congress, which is destined to regulate those vast objects that interest the whole of the States. Each province possesses its own proper legislative assembly,

fembly, and also an independent power of executing its own decrees.

I repeat it once more, the Genius of Liberty reigns there in her full plenitude of glory, the union is happy, but the unity is not absolute, and cannot be so. How is it possible to institute a supreme chief? Each of the United States has an equal right to it; and most horrid divisions would inevitably result from the sole idea of a *King*.

The creation of a free monarchy, the most perfect of all possible governments, was reserved for us.

Hail, France! vast, yet united, country, rear up thy immense body, break thy chains, let the thunder of thy liberty snap them in twain; let the Bastile and all the fortresses of despotism fall and disappear; let Fayette present himself as the soldier of his country, the son of France, the pupil of Washington; he shall continue a citizen until his death. Let the elected representatives of all the classes of the empire, no longer form separate orders, and let there be an absolute equality, and, with the free competition of voices, a sole legislature. Let them speak in the name of the whole nation, and let the nation reply—"This
" is our will!"

Beloved chief of the French! Monarch, who, in spite of thyself, hast hitherto possessed but the false grandeur of the nation, cease to be the powerless idol of a small and abhorred *cast* of oppressing despots, and become the respected sovereign of twenty millions of
freemen

freemen. Ascend, and thou wilt be the first Prince in the world, who ever possessed that glory—ascend the throne of the laws, and see not, within the large horizon of this empire, aught but that liberty which gives and maintains thee in full possession of thy all-powerful sceptre. Thou governest citizens; thou rulest over men, thou art a King, and the only one upon earth !

This perfection of human genius has hitherto been wanting; it was necessary that France should arise, in order to resolve the problem of ages, to organize social order, in absolute unity, and to present to her a chief impassible as a Divinity, and, like him, invariable in his justice !

Eternal Ruler of human occurrences ! who, according to thy promise, wilt dispose every thing in favour of our infant liberty *, it is thou who hast accumulated in silence those remarkable, prodigious, and miraculous events, in order to operate the creation of our happiness.

But, in the combination of all thy benefits, the greatest is, that thou hast given us a Franklin, and connected us with an America, the most propitious is, that thou hast placed in the balance of the destinies, the genius of the National Assembly, and the patriotism of Bailly † and La Fayette; the most happy is, that thou hast in one day given liberty to

* Tu autem dominator virtutis . . . cum magnâ reverentiâ disponis nos. Sap 12 18

† Then Mayor of Paris.

the capital and the provinces, and disposed a King to embrace it.

O memorable success! The surrounding nations can scarce give credit to the truth of it, but they begin to be moved at the sight; their doubts seem to evaporate, and they at length believe that they may be happy.

Tyrants tremble, their reign has passed away, we have now brothers in sentiment over all the earth. But a little longer, and, in a mutual independence and equal affection, the nations of the universe will be astonished at being happy, and at finding themselves Frenchmen!

Venerable old man, august philosopher, legislator of the felicity of thy country, prophet of the fraternity of the human race, what extatic happiness embellished the end of thy career! From thy fortunate asylum, and in the midst of thy brothers, who enjoyed in tranquillity the fruit of thy virtues, and the success of thy genius, thou hast sung songs of deliverance. The last looks which thou cast around thee, beheld America happy, France, on the other side of the ocean, free, and a sure indication of the approaching freedom and happiness of the world.

The United States, looking upon themselves as thy children, have bewailed the death of the father of their republic, France, thy family by adoption, has honoured thee as the founder of her laws, and the human race has revered thee as the universal patriarch

triarch who has formed the alliance of nature with society Thy remembrance belongs to all ages, thy memory to all nations, thy glory to eternity * 1

* M Veillard, Intendant of the waters at Passy, who was very intimate with Franklin, has been kind enough, as well as the celebrated M Fleury, to give me a variety of information relative to him; and this has served as the basis of the present Eulogium. I myself have also had the happiness of being personally known to this great man, having often dined in company with him at the charming little villa belonging to M. Roy de Chaumont, at Passy. He assisted at some of my sermons, and has afforded me many testimonials of his esteem. I might multiply the notes which authenticate the facts mentioned by me in this discourse, but I rather choose to add, by way of appendix to this publication, a justificatory memorial, which M le Roy, a Member of the Academy of Sciences, of the Royal Society of London, of the Philosophical Society of Philadelphia, and Keeper of the King's Cabinet of Natural History, has been so kind as to send me. It arrived too late to be used in the body of the present work, but it confirms all I have advanced, it contains a number of details I was ignorant of, and it cannot fail to interest the public, and give additional support to my labours.

*TRANSLATION of a Letter from M. LE ROY to the
Abbé FAUCHET (now constitutional Bishop of Cal-
vados), relative to the late Dr. FRANKLIN.*

I AM enchanted to hear, Sir, that, elevating your mind above the vain prejudices of the vulgar, you have formed the noble design of pronouncing, in the metropolis of France, the funeral oration of my illustrious friend, who was born a Protestant

Flattered with the confidence which you have been pleased to repose in me, I have endeavoured to comply with your wishes by transmitting you some particulars of the life of this great man, collected partly from what I can recollect in regard to him, and partly from what he himself has told me, in the numerous conversations we have had together.

It is necessary that the class of men, equally vain and imbecile, who wished to establish a privileged *cast* among us, to whom alone the command of the armies, the venerable departments of justice, and the councils of the Sovereign were to be open, it is necessary they should learn that Franklin, like the illustrious Flechier, was the son of a tallow-chandler, that he was born in Boston, that he left it at fourteen years of age, much in the same manner as those young men who, being impatient under the yoke of paternal authority, leave their fathers house in order to seek their fortune elsewhere, that he happened to go to Philadelphia, where, having presented himself to

the only printer then residing in that city, he took a fancy to the boy, in whom he discovered a natural genius, and instructed him in the art of printing*.

I know that M. de la Rochefoucault, in the discourse which he read before the society of 1789†, on the 13th of June last, gives us to understand that he was a journeyman printer in Boston, and that he left it in order to seek for employment at New York and Philadelphia.

But, as well as I can remember, both from what he and his countrymen have told me, he arrived at Philadelphia in 1720, a period when the art of printing, so very curious in itself, was almost unknown to a great part of the country.

I have also learned, that the farmers who frequented that city, and who were fond of whatever was interesting, were accustomed to visit the printing-house in which young Franklin worked, and, being astonished at his activity and address, presented him with many marks of their liberality.

Avaricious of knowledge, and possessing an insatiable desire after instruction, he easily perceived that, at the distance of two thousand leagues from England, it was by books alone that he could gain information: But how could he procure them, when, at this pe-

* It may be necessary to observe here, that this and a number of other little mistakes are corrected in Dr Franklin's first and second letters, Part I.—*Note by the Translator.*

† See page 237

mod, there were not more than perhaps four or five hundred volumes in all Philadelphia.

By way of attaining knowledge, he formed a club consisting of some young men, who were of a similar disposition with himself, and, in order to have the advantage of each other's books, it was agreed that they should place them in one common library. As this resource was not attended with all the advantages at first expected from it, it was resolved to subscribe a small sum every month, to enable them to import all the new works from London.

The young people of Philadelphia having learned that this society possessed a great number and variety of books, were exceedingly desirous to borrow them; this was most readily consented to, on condition of paying a trifle for the use of them, in order to augment their number. In short, this new scheme was attended with so much success, that their little collection swelled into a library, and the other colonies, perceiving the immense advantages arising from such an establishment, began to form similar ones at Boston, New York, Charlestown, and several other places. Thus originated a number of the first libraries in America; and that at Philadelphia may, at this day, dispute its consequence with many of the most celebrated in Europe.

Pardon me, Sir, for entering into these details; for to me they appear interesting, and even necessary. in order to point out how my illustrious friend has

not only been the founder, but, as it were, the school-master, of American independence.

Thinking, however, that all the instruction he could acquire in his own country, was not sufficient to conduct him to that point of perfection at which he wished to arrive, he determined to visit England, and accordingly arrived there about the year 1724 or 1725.

This much is certain, that he was there during the life of Newton, whom he told me he had seen several times, and who did not die until 1727*.

He worked at his business as a printer in London; and it appears to me that he lived in very great obscurity.

After a short residence in the metropolis of England, he returned to America. It was at that period, if I am not greatly mistaken, that he persuaded the printer with whom he had formerly resided to publish a newspaper, in imitation of those he had seen in London. This scheme was attended with success, and the printer, to whom it brought in a large sum, after having, out of gratitude, taken him into co-partnership, gave him his daughter in marriage†.

From this marriage sprung Mr. (commonly called Governor) Franklin, one of the principal American Loyalists, and Mrs. Beach, his favourite daughter, to whose family he has left the greatest part

* March 20, 1726-27.

† This is another mistake See Chap I and II. Part I.

of his fortune *, having bequeathed but one or two farms to Mr William Franklin, the son of the Loyalist, whom you have seen here.

Devoted

* Dr Franklin's will was made during his residence in the village of Passy, near Paris

It begins as follows

"I Benjamin Franklin, printer, at present Minister Plenipotentiary from the United and Independent States of America to his Most Christian Majesty Louis XVI King of France, hereby declare my last will and testament," &c &c

The following articles will evince that this great man was not unmindful of posterity.

"I was born in Boston, New England, and owe my first instructions in literature to the two grammar-schools established there. I have, therefore, considered those schools in my will.

"But I am also under obligations to the State of Massachusetts, for having, unasked, appointed me formerly their agent in England, with a handsome salary, which continued some years. And although I accidentally lost in their service, by transmitting Governor Hutchinson's letters, much more than the amount of what they gave me, I do not think that ought in the least to diminish my gratitude

"I have considered that, among artificers, good apprentices are most likely to make good citizens, and having myself been bred to a manual art, printing, in my native town, and afterwards assisted to set up my business in Philadelphia by kind loans of money from two friends there, which was the foundation of my fortune, and of all the utility in life that may be ascribed to me, I wish to be useful even after my death, if possible, in forming and advancing other young men that may be serviceable to their country in both those towns

"To this end, I devote two thousand pounds sterling, of which I give one thousand to the inhabitants of the town of Boston

Devoted entirely to his profession during a large portion of his life, it appears that, soon after the treaty

ton in Massachusetts, and the other thousand to the inhabitants of the city of Philadelphia, in trust, to and for the uses, intents, and purposes, hereinafter mentioned and declared

“The said sum of one thousand pounds sterling, if accepted by the inhabitants of the town of Boston, shall be managed under the direction of the select men, united with the Ministers of the oldest Episcopalian, Congregational and Presbyterian churches, in that town, who are to let out the same upon interest at five per cent per annum, to such young married artificers under the age of twenty-five years, as have served an apprenticeship in the said town, and faithfully fulfilled the duties required in their indentures, so as to obtain a good moral character from at least two respectable citizens, who are willing to become their sureties in a bond with the applicants for the repayment of the monies so lent, with interest, according to the terms hereinafter prescribed, all which bonds are to be taken for Spanish milled dollars, or the value thereof in current gold coin. And the managers shall keep a bound book or books, wherein shall be entered the names of those who shall apply for and receive the benefit of this institution, and of their sureties, together with the sums lent, the dates, and other necessary and proper records, respecting the business and concerns of this institution. And, as these loans are intended to assist young married artificers in setting up their business, they are to be proportioned by the discretion of the managers, so as not to exceed fifty pounds sterling to one person, nor to be less than fifteen pounds

“And if the number of applicants so entitled should be so large as that the sum will not suffice to afford to each as much as might otherwise not be improper, the proportion to each shall be diminished, so as to afford to every one some assistance

“These aids may therefore be small at first, but, as the capital increases by the accumulating interest, they will be more ample.

“And, in order to serve as many as possible in their turns, as well

treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, he found himself enabled, by the fortune he had acquired, to gratify his passion for

as to make the repayment of the principal borrowed more easy, each borrower shall be obliged to pay, with the yearly interest, one tenth part of the principal, which sums of principal and interest so paid in, shall be again let out to fresh borrowers

“And as it is presumed, that there will be always found in Boston virtuous and benevolent citizens, willing to bestow a part of their time in doing good to their generation, by superintending and managing this institution gratis, it is hoped that no part of the money will at any time lie dead, or be diverted to other purposes, but be continually augmented by the interest, in which case, there may in time be more than the occasion in Boston shall require, and then some may be spared to the neighbouring or other towns in the said State of Massachusetts, which may desire to have it, such towns engaging to pay punctually the interest and the proportions of the principal annually to the inhabitants of the town of Boston.

“If this plan is executed and succeeds as projected, without interruption, for one hundred years, the sum will then be one hundred and thirty-one thousand pounds, of which I would have the managers of the donation to the town of Boston then lay out, at their discretion, one hundred thousand pounds in public works, which may be judged of most general utility to the inhabitants, such as fortifications, bridges, aqueducts, public building, baths, pavements, or whatever else, make living in the town more convenient to its people, and render it more agreeable to strangers resorting thither for health, or a temporary residence

“The remaining thirty-one thousand pounds I would have continued to be let out on interest in the manner above directed, for another hundred years, as I hope it will have been found that the institution has had a good effect on the conduct of youth, and been of service to many worthy characters and useful citizens

“At the end of this second term, if no unfortunate accident has prevented the operation, the sum will be four millions and sixty-

for study From that period he also began to distinguish himself by the services he performed to his native country

The famous Leyden experiment having excited the attention of all the learned men in Europe, Mr. Collinson, a Quaker of London, who was a Member of the Royal Society, transmitted some glass tubes to Mr Franklin, and the other instruments necessary for making experiments in electricity He employed these with so much ability and success, as to be able, by means of their assistance, to accomplish those discoveries which have immortalized his memory.

Two of them particularly characterize his genius: The first is, the unequal distribution of the electric fluid in the human body, whence arise those electrical *phenomena* which present themselves to us The other, which is more grand, and more likely to afford astonishment, is the *para-tonnerre*, or conductor

It may not be unnecessary here to say a few words on this subject, in order the better to develop the genius of my illustrious friend, and to ascertain in what manner he contrived to make the most advantageous applications of certain *phenomena*, the consequences to be deduced from which had escaped the penetration of other naturalists.

one thousand pounds sterling, of which I leave one million and sixty-one thousand pounds to the disposition and management of the inhabitants of the town of Boston, and three millions to the disposition of the government of the State, not presuming to carry my views further, &c."

Mr. Gray, an Englishman, had said, a little before his death, that, if it were permitted to compare small things with great, he dared to affirm that electricity and thunder were one and the same thing. It was in 1735 that this Gentleman, to whom electricity is under great obligations, hazarded this bold comparison. The more the *phenomena* multiplied, the better did this theory appear to be founded.

But how was it possible to pass that immense interval between us and the clouds? It had been discovered in America that pointed substances drew the electric fluid from electric bodies, from a much greater distance, than the bodies which have other shapes. Mr. Franklin instantly reasons upon this idea, and says—if the cause of thunder be the same as that of electricity, if the clouds, during a tempest, are replete with this fluid, there is nothing more to be done than to present a pointed substance upon an elevated place, and this will infallibly be electrified during a storm.

This great and superb conjecture appeared extravagant to those who do not know how to raise themselves above vulgar opinions.

Notwithstanding this, a man was found in France (M. Dalibard), who had the courage to attempt the verification of this experiment, and, on the tenth of May, 1752, a tempest which took place at Marly-la-Ville, where the apparatus was erected, justified, at once and the same time, the hardy conjecture of my illustrious friend, and the courage of M. Dalibard,

who

who had been tempted to try whether it was well founded or not.

In a short time, this new and grand experiment was disclosed to all Europe, and a variety of observations confirmed what M. Dalibard had first seen. Thus I am of opinion, Sir, that, if you should think proper to mention this sublime discovery in your discourse, you can say, it was in France that this experiment was made for the first time, and that it was consequently an honour reserved for us.

From this discovery to the conductor, or *para-tonnere*, there is but a single step; for if points, in preference to all other figures, attract electric matter from the clouds, it will incontestably follow, that a pointed conductor, elevated above a building, will possess this advantage, and that if this could transmit, immediately and without any obstacle, this electric matter to the earth, its common reservoir, by means of a metal chain, no accident could result from it, and a house might, by these means, be entirely preserved from the ravages of the thunder.

The new and hardy ideas conceived by Mr. Franklin found much opposition in England. Notwithstanding this, when he revisited that country in 1755, ample justice was done to his merits, and the Royal Society decreed him the golden medal, which it awards annually to the authors of those memoirs containing interesting and useful discoveries. On this occasion, he was received with great attention and respect, and, much about the same period, he was

admitted Doctor of Laws at one of the English Universities * War having broke out in the succeeding year between England and France, he returned to America, and was much employed in public business.

He has often mentioned to me that, having been appointed a captain of artillery, the matrosses who served under him insisted upon doing him honour by firing a salute before his door, which broke all the china in his house

We are now arrived at that moment when he may be considered as a public man Having been nominated agent for the province of Pennsylvania, he returned to England about the year 1761. At this period there was a prodigious fermentation in the minds of the people of America.

The act enforcing a duty on tea had irritated them exceedingly; and the Boston-port bill, which was enacted soon after, entirely completed the discontent of the Colonies

At length it was resolved that the agent of Pennsylvania, as well as the agents of the other provinces, should be called to the bar of the House of Commons, in order to answer certain interrogatories concerning the population of America, the disposition of the people in regard to the Parliament of England, and the reasons of their resistance to the late imposts

It was on this occasion that my illustrious friend distinguished himself, by the clearness, the force, and the precision of his reasons, and made himself known

to all Europe as a great man. I saw him a few months after in Paris; and M. Maleherbes very justly remarked, when I presented him to that gentleman, that he was the first learned man who had discovered extraordinary talents for politics. This was an advantage he derived from the nature of the government under which he lived. as it permitted the efforts of the human mind to be directed towards those important objects which have for their object the happiness and the felicity of the people

Had this man been born in Paris, under our ancient system, he would have remained for ever in obscurity. How would it have been possible to have employed the son of a tallow-chandler? Indeed, if his genius for the sciences had forced the barriers opposed by his birth, he might have been elected a member of an academy!

Ought it not to be readily allowed by every body, that population being one of the most important objects for a State, a too great competition and rivalry for employments can never be dreaded, and that the probability of possessing citizens capable of worthily presiding in the different departments, augments always in proportion to the number of candidates who aspire to the honour of filling them?

I now return to my illustrious friend: I have only permitted myself to make this digression on account of the indignation with which an absurd aristocratical tyranny, that designated and confined the employments of a kingdom to a particular *sect*, has ever inspired me.

me. What renders this still more insufferable is, that this very sect was much less capable, and less instructed, than that of the *third Estate*, which had been so much despised.

The replications of Franklin added new force to the resolutions of the Colonies, and augmented the number of the partizans which they already had in Parliament. But such was the obstinacy of the men who surrounded the King of Great Britain, that they insisted on laying imposts upon the Americans, in direct opposition to the spirit of that very law, which says that the citizens can never be taxed but by their own consent.

At length the Americans determine to assemble a Congress.

About this time, my illustrious friend, who had formerly possessed great influence with the English Ministry (for he had been able to procure the appointment of Governor of New Jersey for his son), began to lose all his interest at Court, and Mr Wedderburne (now Lord Loughborough), who was at that time Attorney General, and a true *aristocrat*, permitted himself to treat him with great insolence and haughtiness. It was even said, that there was an intention of imprisoning him.

Perceiving at length that his residence in England could be no longer useful to his countrymen, he resolved to leave it, and concerted his measures with so much address, that he had embarked and was actually at sea, in the beginning of the year 1775, at the very
time

time that he was thought, by his enemies, to be still in England.

The events of that period are well known. Every body recollects that, in June or July 1776, America declared herself independent, and that she took all the measures in her power to assert and secure her sovereignty. I beg leave to observe, however, that it was towards the close of July, or the beginning of August, that Mr. Deane, who came from America in order to negotiate with the Court of France, and Mr. Bencroft, who came from England to assist him in his labours, met at my house.

Franklin, as every body knows, was one of the most strenuous supporters of American liberty, and was perpetually busied in preparing every thing for that great revolution which was about to give freedom to his country.

The Congress sent him to Canada in the autumn of 1776, to negotiate with the inhabitants, and engage them to make a common cause with the Colonies, in order to throw off the yoke of England. But the Canadians were so disgusted with the excesses committed by their neighbours, the Presbyterians of New England, who had destroyed and burnt several of their chapels, that they could never be prevailed upon to listen to the propositions of the Colonies, although supported with all the energy which he knew how to give to every thing with which he was entrusted.

Fana-

Fanaticism is an enemy to the happiness of mankind, and is to be found in all religions, the Presbyterians of the English Colonies have preserved, from their very origin, a certain gloominess and spirit of tyranny in their character, which they not only displayed then against the Canadians, but upon many other occasions.

Having failed on this occasion, Dr Franklin returned to Philadelphia, and the Congress knowing the consideration which he enjoyed in Europe, and the reputation which he had acquired by his philosophical discoveries, entrusted him with a mission to France, where he was to put the last hand to the negotiations which Mr. Deane had already commenced in a secret manner.

- Although now in the seventy-first year of his age, he accepted this delicate and important commission, and arrived at Paris about the sixteenth of December 1776.

The success of the Americans in the northern provinces, and the defeat of General Burgoyne by General Gates, in the autumn of 1777, at length determined our Court to give a more favourable hearing to the propositions of the Congress; and, either towards the end of this year, or the beginning of 1778, the treaty of alliance and commerce with the States of America was signed, a circumstance which led us into a war with England.

I flatter myself, that I in some measure contributed towards the signing of this treaty, for, knowing the efforts

efforts made by the English in order to induce the insurgents to return under the yoke of the mother-country, I informed M. Maurepas of this circumstance, by means of one of my particular friends, telling him, at the same time, that there was not a moment to be lost, if he wished to preserve the alliance of the Americans, and detach them from Great Britain.

Never did I see a mortal so happy, so joyous, as Franklin, on the day when Lord Stormont, Ambassador from England, left Paris, on account of the rupture with our Court. We dined together; and he who was usually very calm and tranquil, appeared to me, on that day, to be quite a new man.

At length, in consequence of a series of the most fortunate events, in less than seven years, North America became free, and my illustrious friend had the happiness and the glory, in 1783, of signing, along with the English Commissioners, that peace which recognised the independence of his country.

Until that period, he had enjoyed a good state of health, and was free from any complaint whatever, except that he was subject to the gout. In 1782, he had a very violent fit, which was accompanied with a very grievous nephritic colic. This appears to have been the origin of the stone, with which he was afterwards tortured; for, in the course of the year 1783, he suffered several very violent attacks, and, from that epoch, they continued daily to augment.

As

As his mind was full of resources, and calculated for every situation in life, he found means, in some measure, to alleviate the violence of his pains, and render his malady more supportable.

His wishes being now fully accomplished, and peace concluded, he sighed after the moment when he might once more revisit his native country. He accordingly requested several times to be recalled by Congress: But how was it possible to replace him? However, that illustrious body, on his reiterated applications, nominated Mr. Jefferson Minister to our Court, and certainly they could not have made a better choice, nor appointed a man more worthy to succeed my illustrious friend.

His successor having at length arrived*, he resolved to depart. It was not an easy matter to repair to Havre,
in

* "I found the Ministers of France (says Mr. Jefferson) equally impressed with Dr. Franklin's talents and integrity. The Count de Vergennes particularly gave me repeated and unequivocal demonstrations of his entire confidence in him.

"When he left Paris, it seemed as if the village had lost its *patriarch*. On taking leave of the Court, which he did by letter, the King ordered him to be handsomely complimented, and furnished him with a *liter* and *mulet* of his own, the only kind of conveyance that the state of his health could bear.

"The succession to Dr. Franklin, at the Court of France, was an excellent school of humility to me. On being presented to any one as the Minister of America, the common-place question was, *C'est vous, Monsieur, qui remplacez le Docteur Franklin?*—"Is it you, Sir, who replaces Dr. Franklin?" I generally answered

in order to embark; he, however, made a shift to reach the place of his destination in carriages supplied by the Court. From that port he set sail for Newport, in the Isle of Wight, and, after a short and agreeable passage, he arrived at Philadelphia in September 1785, amidst the acclamations of an immense crowd of spectators, who were eager to see him, and who accompanied him from the place where he landed to his own house.

A few days after his arrival, the Members of the Congress, and all the eminent people in Philadelphia, and the adjacent country, waited upon him. In a short time, he was elected, for two years following, Presi-

“fwered—“ No one can replace him, Sir, I am only his successor.”

“A little before my arrival in France, Argand had invented his celebrated *lamp*, in which the flame is spread into a hollow cylinder, and thus brought into contact with the air, within as well as without. Dr. Franklin had been on the point of the same discovery. The idea had occurred to him, but he had tried a bull-rush as a wick, which did not succeed. His occupations did not permit him to repeat and extend his trials to the introduction of a larger column of air than could pass through the stem of a bull-rush.

“About this time, also, the King of France gave him a signal testimony of respect, by joining him with some of the most illustrious men of the nation, to examine that *ignis fatuus* of philosophy, the *animal magnetism* of the *monstrous* Mesmer, the pretended effects of which had astonished all Paris. From Dr. Franklin’s hand, in conjunction with his brethren of the learned committee, that compound of fraud and folly was unveiled, and received its death-wound.”

dent of the Assembly of Philadelphia; but at length his great age, and the malady with which he was attacked, precluding him entirely from the administration of public affairs, he demanded and obtained leave to retire, in order to pass the remainder of his life in tranquillity amidst his fellow-citizens, to offer up vows for their prosperity, and to occupy himself entirely with his beloved study, which was natural history.

There is one thing which I have forgotten to mention to you, Sir, it is, that, during his passage to America, he wrote a long memorial, addressed to my brother, full of excellent ideas relative to the improvement of ship-building.

You have heard of the honours that were paid to him after his death. They are such as he merited, and such as a free people ought to render to the memory of a man, who had made them so by the pains he had taken to elevate their minds, and to instruct them relative to their own rights. I have a variety of facts to add, but this letter is already too long. I beg leave to tell you truly, and by way of excuse, that I have not had time to shorten it, having a thousand other things to do at the present moment; as to the rest, I beg you will look upon this as the *Sylva Sylvarum* of Bacon, in which he had assembled every thing that he thought could be serviceable to his great edifice of philosophy. As for me, I have endeavoured to collect all the facts that may contribute to the oration you are about to pronounce in honour of my illustrious friend.

I cannot

I cannot avoid adding a few words more, relative to the character of his genius, and the temper of his mind. Tranquil, calm, and circumspect, like the generality of his countrymen, he could never be reproached during his residence here, and amidst the most delicate and embarrassing circumstances, with having uttered a single word, or expression, which could be quoted against him. This is a very uncommon circumstance, when we consider the part he acted, and the number of spies who watched every look and every sentence,

He possessed all the courage necessary for great events, and it was that firm courage which appertains to elevated minds, which, after having considered every thing, looks upon events as the necessary and inevitable consequence of the order of human affairs.

In regard to his mind, it had this peculiar characteristic, which has not hitherto been sufficiently attended to; I mean the faculty of observing and examining things, in the most simple manner possible. In his philosophical and political inquiries, he always looked at the question, in its most natural point of view. This was invariably the same, whether the subject was philosophical or mechanical.

In fine, while the bulk of mankind arrive only at what is true and simple, by a circuitous road and multiplied efforts, the superiority of his genius enabled him, by the most easy means, to explain the *phenomena* under discussion, to construct a machine for which he had occasion, or, in short, to dis-

discover the most proper expedients for the success of those plans, projects, and experiments, with which his thoughts were so frequently occupied.

I have the honour to be, with the utmost respect,

S I R,

Your very humble, and

Most obedient servant,

LE ROY.



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